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OCTOBER 1992

WIZARD™ No. 14

THE GUIDE TO COMICS

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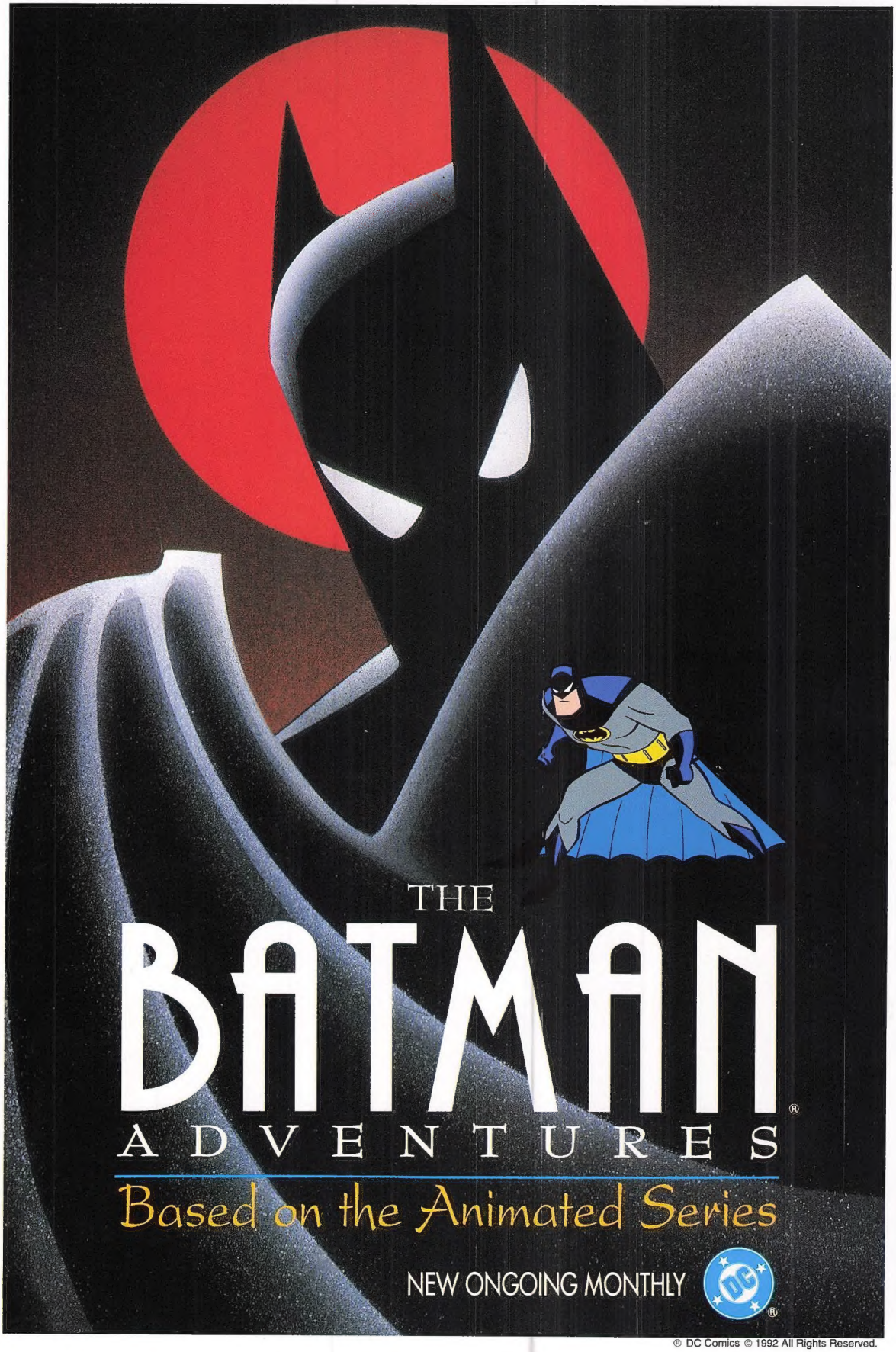

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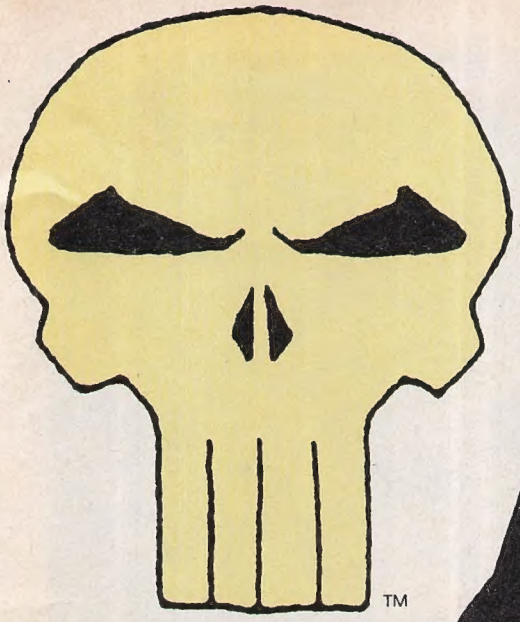

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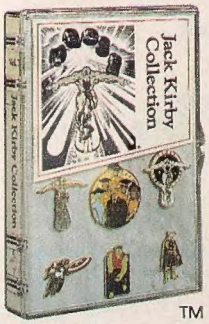

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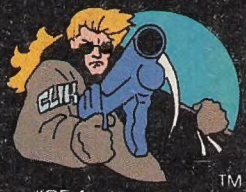

#254
Johnny Blaze

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WIZARD

Volume 1
Number 14
October 1992

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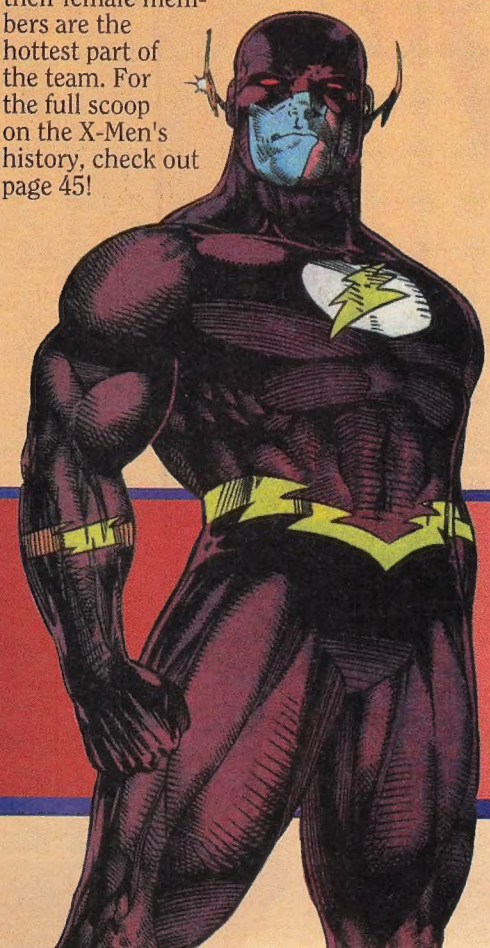

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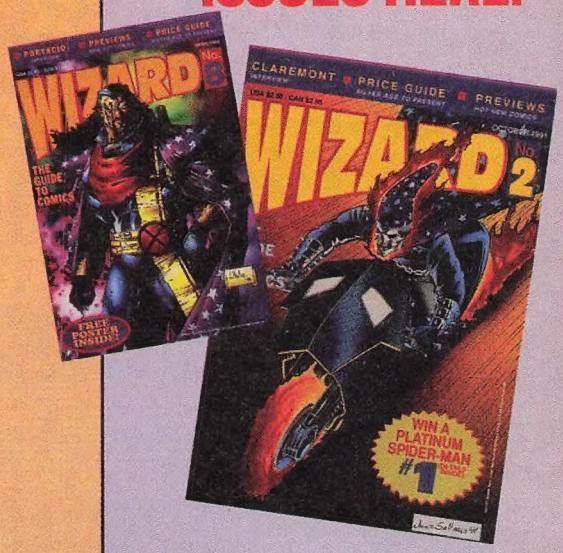

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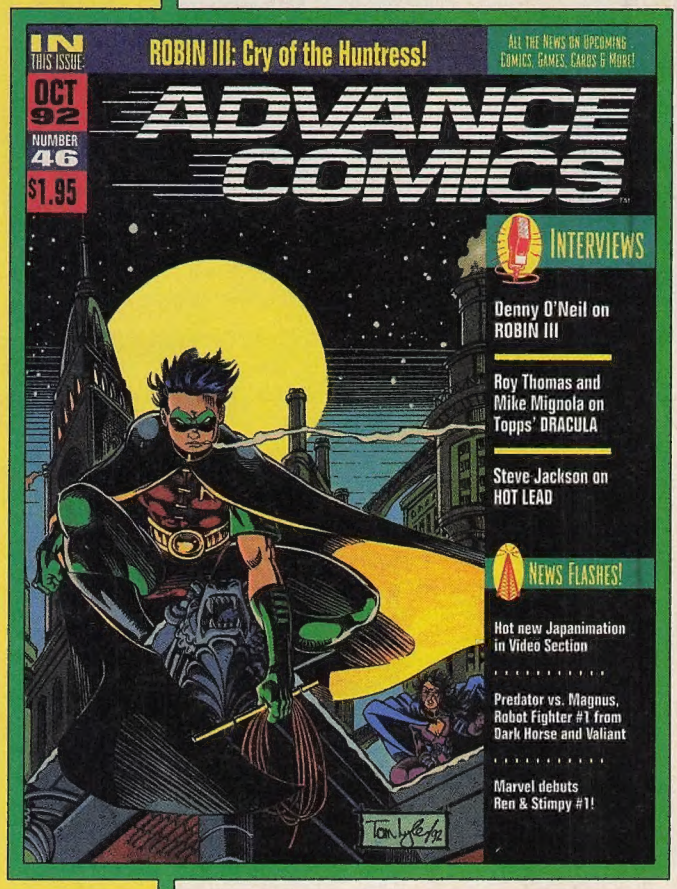

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A Letter From Our PUBLISHER

Gareb makes an amazing new friend.

Well, the excitement continues this month in *Wizard*. I'm sure you are saying: "It's about time they put some women on the cover." Fueled by popular demand, Art Thibert created "The X-Women." Make sure you check out our special write-ups on the X-Men, and a great look at the upcoming "X-Ecutioner's Song." According to Fabian Nicieza, this crossover will be "Hot, hot, hot!"

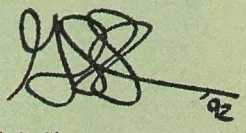
Valiant continues its dominance in the back-issue department; the books are flying off shelves everywhere. Their limited edition books, such as red *Unity*, gold *Eternal Warrior*, and gold *Archer & Armstrong* are going through the roof.

We can certainly call August Image Comics Month. With all their new titles, Image was actually the #2 publisher for the month. After only a few months in the comic publishing business, Image has exploded onto the scene and continues to expand its base of creators.

Marvel bought the Fleer Corporation — what do you think of that? I think... well, I won't tell you what I think, but fans are in for some great treats. You'll probably see some terrific promotions coming from both companies. Since the comic book distribution system is so sophisticated and efficient, Fleer will hopefully take advantage of it with their sports products.

Can you see the trend here? With all these ground-breaking events, everybody benefits, especially the fans — better comics, better products, and more fun. Hey, *I'm* having a good time!

Regards,



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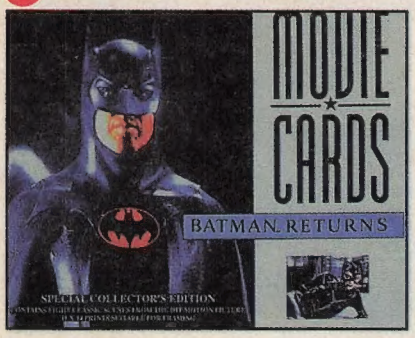

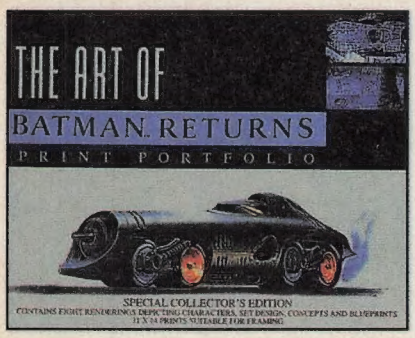

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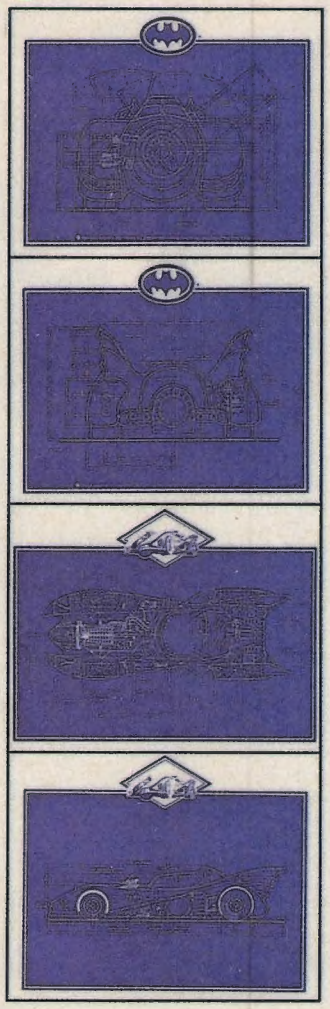

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A letter from the Editor

COMIC-BOOK WRITERS—A DYING BREED?

More than a year ago, in the very first issue of *Wizard*, I asked some questions about the role of the editor in the comic-book business. Today, I'm forced to ask some hard questions about the role of the writer.

The general public, unfortunately, is blissfully unaware that most comics are still done by more than a single person. A comic-book writer who, at a party, announces something like, "I write *Colossal Guy*," is likely to be asked, "Can you draw me a picture of him for my little boy?" The writer must then explain that someone else, an artist, draws CG's adventures.

It's not unexpected that, in a visual medium, the artist gets more attention than the writer, at least from the general public and the fans. Even in the Golden Age, it was often only the artist whose name appeared on the stories. (How many of you know that the early Batman stories were written by Bill Finger, not Bob Kane?) Still, the professionals seemed to value a good writer, as editors clamored for the work of people like Gardner Fox and Otto Binder. Sure, they were always artists who also wrote; some of them were among the greats—Will Eisner is a prime example. But the writer's contribution to the great collaborative series was not neglected.

Something has changed. More and more, artists are clamoring for the chance to write their own stories, and editors and publishers are responding positively. Sometimes, these artist-writers turn out to be true gems: Frank Miller, Walt Simonson, Dan Jurgenson, John Byrne for example. But lately, it seems that the artists who decide to write are getting the nod based solely on their popularity, without regard to their writing ability. The results have been a spate of books with fantastic art and no story to speak of: It's like buying portfolio albums of loosely connected pictures.

But they aren't comics. Comics are primarily storytelling vehicles. If the stories are negligible, so are the final results, no matter how impressive the art.

My advice to you, the reader? Don't settle for second-rate or third-rate writing combined with extraordinary art; you wouldn't settle for the opposite, would you? You wouldn't settle for a movie that was filled with terrific images and no story worth your attention. (Actually, considering the success of *Batman Returns*, maybe you would.)

-Patrick Daniel O'Neill

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TODAY'S EARFORCE

WIZARD NEWS

THE INSIDE SCOOP ON THE WORLD OF COMICS

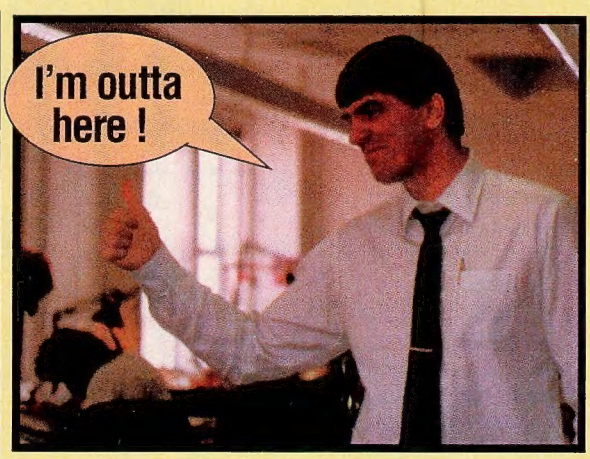
Shooter leaves Valiant

JIM SHOOTER, former President of Voyager Communications, Inc. (which publishes Valiant Comics) is no longer with the company. Shooter's departure was the result of a difference between him and the rest of the management team over how Voyager should be managed. It had become clear to the team at Voyager that Jim had a different vision of how the company should be managed.

The co-creators of the Valiant universe have stepped in to fill any potential gaps left by Shooter's departure. Bob Layton is now Editor-in-Chief, and Barry Windsor-Smith is taking over as President. Windsor-Smith is said to be taking his new role in stride. In addition to working on the comics, he is editing, recruiting new creators, continuing current projects, and beginning new ones.

Valiant's spokesperson said the company has always stressed the team approach, and that emphasis will continue. Creative meetings at Valiant are described as being like giant pow-wows, with everyone in the office contributing to storylines, new characters, and new directions for the books.

So what does Valiant have coming up in the near



future? In August, Valiant offers *Rai* #0, with art by *Harbinger* regular David Lapham and story by Bob Layton. This lynchpin of the Valiant universe hints at all sorts of going-on in the futures of the Valiant superheroes. Fans will love reading about the origin of the Rai powers, the grisly 1999 death of Shadowman, the scattering of the X-O armor, the Harbinger wars, and the future of H.A.R.D. Corps, as well as the origins of Valiant's new rising star, Bloodshot!

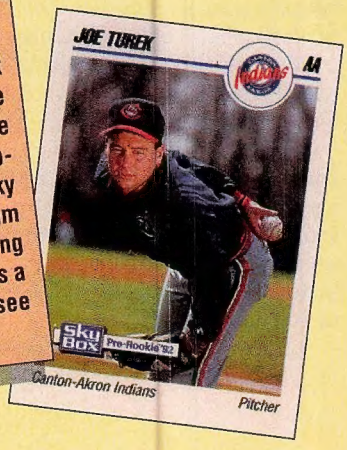
In September, Valiant debuts *H.A.R.D. Corps*, written by Bob Layton and David Micheline, penciled by David Lapham, and inked by Bob Layton, with a Jim Lee gatefold cover. Cover-to-cover action is featured every month in this book, which centers around the exploits of the corporate enemies of Harbinger C.E.O. Harada. They band together to sponsor the H.A.R.D. Corps, a combat team of mercenaries who can simulate Harbinger powers. Naturally, they'll go head-to-head with the Harbinger kids every once in a while!

October brings us the first installation of *Predator vs. Magnus*, produced in conjunction with Dark Horse Comics. The crossover pits the ultimate robot fighter against the ultimate hunter, with art by Lee Weeks and story by John Ostrander, based on a plot by Jim Shooter.

Valiant scores four in a row in November with the introduction of a new title, the second installment of *Predator vs. Magnus*, a sweeping change for *Magnus Robot Fighter*, and the introduction of the *Eternal Warrior*, as penciled and

PRE-ROOKIE '92

Sky Box International (formerly Impel) announced it would ship the two Pre-Rookie '92 card lines in July. The two sets are the AA and AAA sets, and each includes the 289 top prospects for that league plus 21 special subset and checklist cards. Along with both of these, Sky Box will offer a 25-card Pre-Rookie limited edition team set including all players and coaches on the opening day roster for each of the 52 AA and AAA teams, plus a team checklist. So enter the minor leagues and see who's up and coming before they've come up.



written by Barry Windsor-Smith.

Bloodshot debuts in his own ongoing monthly title. Not only is the cover art for *Bloodshot* #1 by Barry Windsor-Smith, it's also a first ever counterfeit-proof chromium cover. Bloodshot, a computerized mercenary with a corporate beef to settle, makes Frank Castle look like Archie Andrews.

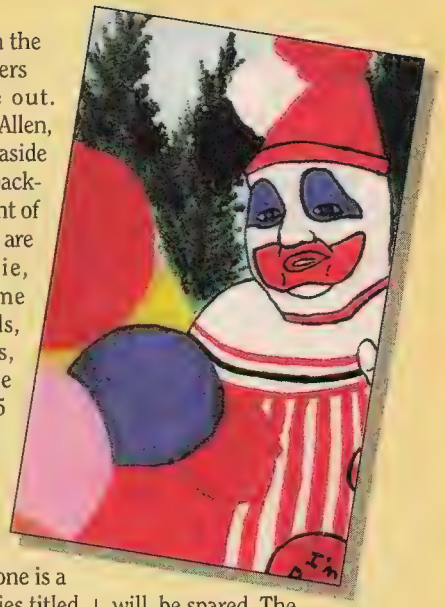
The gang at Valiant felt that *Magnus* needed some new blood, and writer John Ostrander has signed on to shake the *Magnus* status quo. Some existing supporting characters will die, some will change allegiances, and all will be changed forever! Ostrander promises to deliver with a new, three-year storyline that will blow *Magnus* fans away.

Shipping in January after a four-month hiatus, *Rai* #9 introduces the new Rai, together with Future Force. What's the new Rai going to be like? Fans will have to wait and see, but this Rai is directly related to Bloodshot (the November title), unlike other Rais preceding him. Together with Future Force, he fights a dirty war in a changed and harsher, post-Ostrander future. Fans should hold onto the first eight issues of *Rai,* as storylines will be continued in *Rai* #9.

Turok fans have been pleased with his appearances in *Magnus* and *Unity,* but will be even happier to learn that he gets his own title in March of 1993 — *Turok, Dinosaur Hunter.* This ongoing monthly series will be brought into the present day Valiant universe, where Turok will battle post-Unity dinosaur refugees while championing the rights of Native Americans.

Killer cover for Comic Zone

Psycho Killers #8 has a real killer cover by John Wayne Gacy, Jr. (the convicted killer of over 30 people) of Pogo the Clown, the character he would dress up as at children's parties. Inside will be an actual photograph of Gacy as Pogo. There is also a letter from the convicted killer who has been on death row since 1980. This letter is "unedited" and is said to include opinions about his only interview, which was cut up, as well as the investigation concerning his crimes. An FBI report on the matter will also be inside. In tune with the comic, a Serial Killers game is also due out. Designed by Tobias Allen, the game features (aside from "gruesome" packaging) an assortment of unusual goods. Inside are a board, one die, instructions, crime and outcome cards, four killer figures, and (how could we forget) a bag of 25 babies. The game is labeled as "for adults only." SRP $49.95 USA.



Also being offered by Comic Zone is a three-part mini-series titled *Comic Wars* , a story about the results of an all-out war between comic publishers. The overused ploys and bobbing and weaving of the biggies will be cut to pieces. The "wimpy" maketing strategies will be shot down. Supposedly, nothing will be spared. The first issue will be available in a signed, numbered, and bagged version. Each of those special editions will include a mini-bagged comic inside, to emphasize its point. The series is written and drawn by Nat Gertler and John Stinsman.

SEGA AND EX-MUTANTS TEAM UP

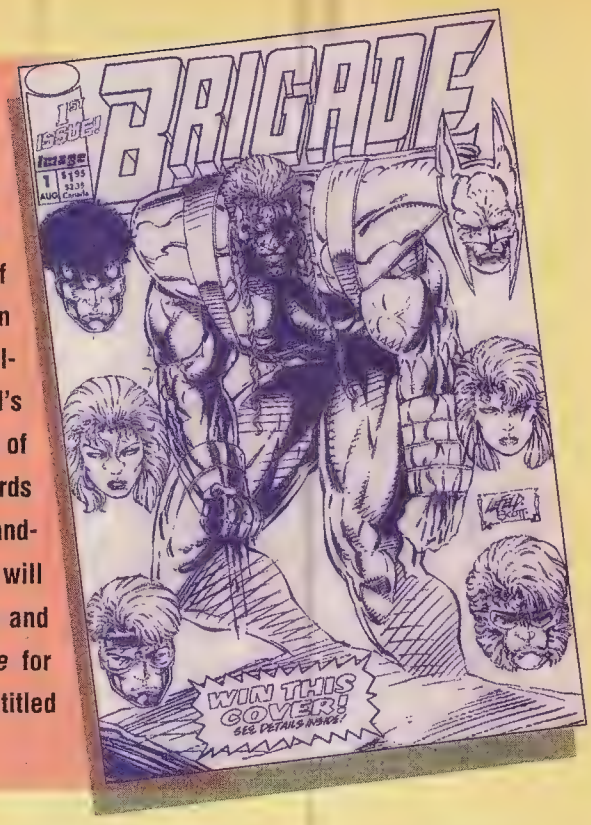
From the pages of *Ex-Mutants* comes the Ex-Mutants video game. You choose from two player characters on your mission to rescue your other teammates. From Sega's creation team, this 8-megabit cart for the Sega Genesis boasts some pretty intense new effects. Aside from 3-D parallax scrolling (multiple backround fields moving at different speeds), and 8-way scrolling, some above-standard effects are being incorporated. 8 frames of animation should produce very realistic character motion. Plus, enemies will no longer just stand and wait to be killed; in this game they can duck, dodge, parry, and actually defend themselves. Also, there is no escape — they will hunt you down until you face them. Within the game you can find 16 items to help you, plus your rescued teammates will offer you hints. So warm up your Genesis and prepare for battle!

Sonic Boom!

Sonic The Hedgehog is coming to comics fast! The outrageous little rodent from the hit Sega Genesis game is soon to run headfirst into his own title. His first comic will be numbered 0, and will be shipping in October. This is another offering from Archie Adventure Series, with art by Scott Shawl and writing by Paul Castiglia. In November, a three-issue mini-series will appear, also starring our mini-friend. Within each is a fast paced story of Sonic battling it out against the enemy of fun — Dr. Robotnik— while trying to rescue his friends who have been turned into robots by the Doc. The little speedster's book will sell for $1.25 including the #0 collector's book, so be on the lookout and catch Sonic, if you can.

Liefeld Cover Contest

Rob Liefeld and the Image gang announced that *Brigade* #1 will include the chance to name the book's letters column and win the original art from the cover. The first spin-off magazine from the pages of *Youngblood* - Rob Liefeld's main contribution to the Image group - will be sporting some talent aside from Mr. Liefeld. Marat Michaels, who was Liefeld's assistant from as far back as 1986, will be penciling most of the book. This is the same guy who penciled the trading cards included in *Brigade* #1. Rob speaks very highly of this up- and-comer, so watch for him. To ink Michaels' work, Image will recruit the services of Paul Scott. Another Image rookie and Liefeld co-conspirator, he worked with Liefeld on *X-Force* for Marvel. This info and more can be found on the as-yet untitled letters page of *Brigade.*



DC Gets Vertigo

DC Comics, the leader in mainstream, mature-oriented comics, strengthens its commitment to its adult audience with Vertigo, an imprint which features familiar titles such as *Sandman, Hellblazer, Doom Patrol, Animal Man, Swamp Thing,* and *Shade. Vertigo* will introduce new dark characters from the edge of the DC universe, and reintroduce some familiar faces as well.

Each title under the Vertigo banner will feature a striking new cover design that will promote its offbeat nature; each book will bear the Vertigo logo and will be clearly identifiable as a DC title.

No new projects have been announced for the imprint, but DC is not limiting itself to the regular comic book format. Aside from monthly titles, Vertigo will feature one-shots, limited series, and graphic novels. Some projects will be creator-owned, ensuring that Vertigo will attract some of the big names in the industry.

The fan reaction to DC's more challenging and controversial titles precipitated the event, as did improvements in creator contracts. "We've always tried, editorially, to shake up the status quo," says Vertigo group editor Karen Berger. "Now we have the freedom to take it even further. It's almost like being rewarded for bad behavior."

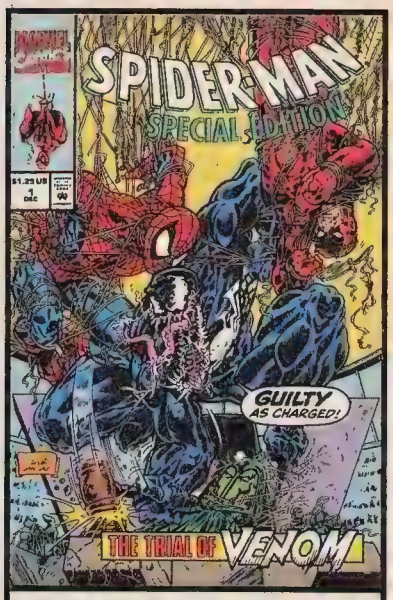
Marvel to Buy Fleer

Marvel Comics, the largest publisher of comics in the nation, has agreed to purchase the Fleer Corporation, one of the largest trading card manufacturers. The purchase price was reportedly $28 a share, or $265,000,000. The two businesses fit together perfectly, as Marvel has steadily moved into the trading card business with the series of cards produced by Skybox International and Comic Images.

Marvel will now have a more direct route into the trading card industry, but it remains unclear whether other card manufacturers will retain Marvel licenses.

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

this SPIDER-MAN special edition is NOT for sale!



SPIDER-MAN: THE TRIAL OF VENOM

Features...
- 32 spectacular pages!
- an extra-heavy cover with metallic ink!
- a whopping fold-out poster!
- a protective polybag!

But...it can be yours by simply sending in the coupon below with a donation of at least $5.00 to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF.

Marvel Comics has joined the U.S. Committee for UNICEF in announcing this *very* special edition of Spider-Man: The Trial of Venom with proceeds going directly to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF—the United Nations Children's Fund.

Already this Spider-Man special edition is hot...and the offer is limited. So order now! In fact, order as many copies as you wish as long as each order is accompanied by a separate coupon* or a facsimile and a donation of at least $5.00. And remember...for every donation you make, you'll be helping needy children throughout the world.

*Ask your local comic book retailer for extra coupons. This offer is only valid if you have a Continental U.S. mailing address.

SPIDER-MAN: THE TRIAL OF VENOM SPECIAL OFFER

(valid only until December 31, 1992)

☐ Please send me my special edition of Spider-Man. Enclosed is my gift in the amount of:

☐ $5.00 ☐ $10.00 ☐ $_____

Minimum contribution of $5.00 required.

☐ I want to help. Enclosed is my gift in the amount of $_____. Thank you, but no need to send comic.

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Send cash or check/money order payable to:
U.S. Committee for UNICEF, P.O. Box 2018, Cape Girardeau, MO 63702-2018

Conceal cash contributions within a folded piece of paper. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

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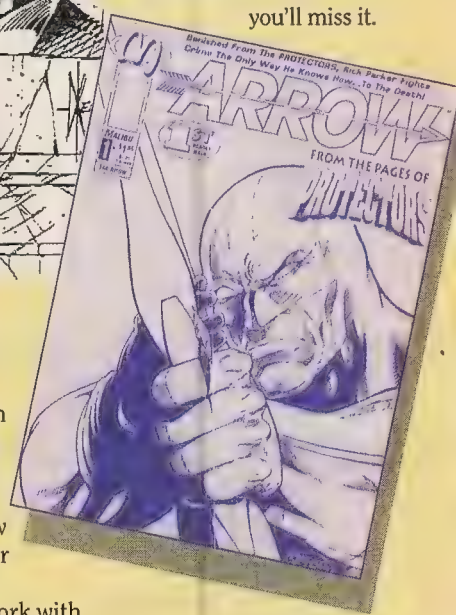
Into the PITT

Image Comics has added artist Dale Keown to their already impressive stable of creators. Best known for his work on *Incredible Hulk,* Keown has left that title as of Issue #398 to work exclusively for Image. When asked to explain PITT, Keown laughed. "Between Erik Larsen [the creator of Savage Dragon] and myself, we're keeping the monster as leading man concept alive." PITT is an extraterrestrial creature trapped on earth who has assumed the role of a superhero. This doesn't sit well with his fellow Alien Buddies, who while at war with each other, have the time to send bounty hunters to track PITT down.

One of the first supporting characters will be Timmy, a young boy who develops a friendship with PITT, and the two learn they share a psychic bond, "a link that will allow PITT to learn English and function" Keown explains. The first issue is scheduled to debut in November.

Arrow Comin' at Ya

Malibu Comics gives you its second Protectors spin-off one-shot due out in October. *Arrow* #1 is a direct tie-in with the Protectors series, written by Roland Mann and drawn by Lee Moder. The book stars Rick Parker, once an archery hunter who perfected his skills, now a man who wants to be a superhero. He attempts to join the Protectors, but they say no to killing, so he tries to fight crime on his own. The conflicts between the Protectors and Arrow endure, as does Rick's trouble in dealing with the guilt of having hurt innocents. We can't give you the details, so be on the lookout for *Arrow* #1 this October. Don't duck or you'll miss it.



Dark Horse

Dark Horse is offering some hot new titles this year. Publisher Mike Richardson let it slip that these new titles would be out from their creator-owned stable this summer. Starting with *The American, Dark Horse Comics, Dead Face, Freaks' Amour, Grendel: War Child,* and *Nexus the Liberator*, all number ones, as well as *The Mask Returns* #1 which includes a free color mask of The Mask. Then come more movie-based titles like *Alien 3, Terminator: Endgame; Terminator: Hunters and Killers*. Also coming is the *Evil Dead: Army of Darkness, The Thing From Another World: Climate of Fear, James Bon 007; Serpent's Tooth, Godzilla Color Special*, and *Aliens: Newt's Tale* and *Robocop vs. Terminator* by Frank Miller and Walt Simonson, all of which are number ones. Keep an eye on the Horse for all these and more this summer.

Aside from comics offerings, Dark Horse has taken on some interesting new staff. Sculpter Randy Bowen, who has done work with *Alien, Predator, The Mask, King Kong,* and *Concrete* has been named as their new product development director. After five years with DC, Dan Thorsland will join the stable as well. Now hold your horses, they'll be along soon.

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PALMER'S PICKS

By Tom Palmer, Jr.

In the mid 1980s, several revisionist superhero stories appeared from a variety of creators. These ranged from new interpretations of old characters, like Swamp Thing in *Saga of the Swamp Thing*, and Batman in *The Dark Knight Returns*, to new characters like The One, Marshal Law, and Watchmen. The author of the best of these new twists on the traditional superheroes was a British writer named Alan Moore, then unknown in America, who wrote *Watchmen*, *Swamp Thing*, and *Marvelman* (later changed to *Miracleman*).

WATCHMEN #12 and V FOR VENDETTA #3 © 1992 DC Comics.

Moore first gained attention by taking over DC's *Swamp Thing* and turning the main character from a man mutated into a shambling muck monster to a plant elemental with control over all flora. But, before revitalizing *Swamp Thing*, Moore changed *Marvelman*, England's version of the original Captain Marvel, into a middle-aged man who had forgotten the magic word that transformed him into a superhero. Moore took his revisionist ideas even further when he collaborated with Dave Gibbons on *Watchmen*. Moore created his own group of characters (based in part on the old Charlton heroes) and placed them in a world on the verge of nuclear war that was drastically changed by the emergence of the first superheroes in the 1930s. Moore and Gibbons loaded each panel with symbolic background details based on happy faces, clocks set on the predicted time of Armageddon, radiation signs, and Rorschach ink blots.

Moore left DC a short while after completing *Watchmen* due to a dispute over a proposed ratings system and the future of the Watchmen characters. Before leaving, Moore finished a series he began (along with *Marvelman*) in the English anthology *Warrior* called "V For Vendetta." The story features V, an anarchistic terrorist who fights the fascist government of a post-apocalyptic England. Although *V for Vendetta* was not a typical "comic book" story, it marked Moore's departure from mainstream comics.

Moore pursued his independence further by founding his own publishing imprint (along with Deborah Delano and Phyllis Moore), called Mad Love (Publishing), Ltd. His first venture with his new company was a benefit book to protest the passing of Clause 28, a British law that drastically discriminated against homosexuals. Moore assembled the work of fellow creators such as Dave Sim, Frank Miller, Steve Bissetts, John Totleben and others in a book called *Aargh!* Due to the success of *Aargh!*, Moore decided to continue Mad Love with other projects.

The first of these projects was the long-awaited, ambitious series *Big Numbers*, with Bill Sienkiewicz. Moore had been mentioning the 12-issue series about shopping malls and fractal mathematics for a long time under its original name, *The Mandelbrot Set*. The story was to start in black-and-white and gradually switch to full color by the final issue. Moore based his story on chaos theory, a new science that attempts to find order in what are usually perceived as chaotic or random occurences. The visual representation of the underlying patterns of random numbers and disorderly events are called fractals. These complex diagrams can be traced back to other seemingly random shapes in nature such as snowflakes, coastlines, and clouds. Moore has used this new science as an underlying theme in what is essentially a story of a small English community that is changed by the construction of an American shopping mall nearby. Each of the 40 characters in *Big Numbers* has been plagued by a series of lengthy delays. Among them are the departure of

Sienkiewicz, scheduling problems, and the scaling-back of *Mad Love*. Moore has apparently solved all of these problems by replacing Sienkiewicz with his former assistant Al Columbia, and publishing with the help of Tundra. Once a number of issues have been completed, *Mad Love* and Tundra will finish the series on a regular basis.

Moore also has two other series, both of which are being serialized in *Taboo*. The first of these is "From Hell," an investigation of the Whitechapel murders on which Moore is collaborating with Eddie Campbell. In more familiar terms, the story concerns Jack the Ripper and a guess at his true identity. Moore has based his story on a disputed theory by Steven Knight that names three different people who conspired to murder five London prostitutes who threatened to blackmail the royal family with knowledge of the Duke of Clarence's illegitimate daughter. Moore and Campbell have been producing each part of the 16-chapter story with an eye for the particulars of Victorian England, such as the dialects and architecture of the time.

Moore's other current series is "Lost Girls," an erotic story with full color artwork from Melinda Gebbie. Moore and Gebbie have crafted a unique take on the traditional erotic comic by using three familiar literary protagonists as the main characters. Alice from *Through the Looking Glass*, Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, and Wendy from *Peter Pan* all meet in a hotel in Europe before World War I to illustrate Moore and Gebbie's story. The series is presented in eight-page chapters in *Taboo* that will eventually be collected.

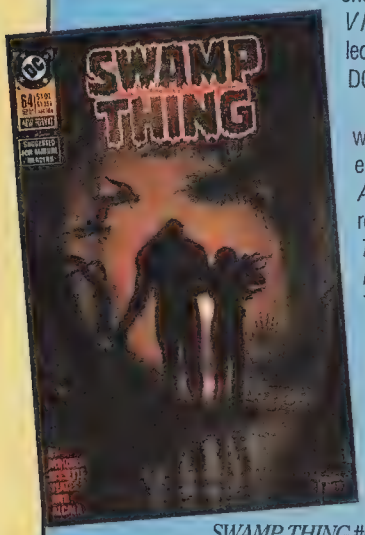
Aside from these continuing projects, Moore has also completed some other self-contained comics such as a story in *Raw* with Mark Beyer and *A Small Killing* with Oscar Zarate. With *Big Numbers*, "From Hell," and "Lost Girls" underway, Alan Moore has many opportunities to show how he has progressed from writing mainstream superhero stories to crafting complex and intriguing comic book novels.

HELP!!!

Please help me! I need to know if any of you out there actually read this column. Every time I get my copy of *Wizard*, I scour the letters page to see if anybody has anything to say about Palmer's Picks. So far, I've been horribly disappointed. If you are reading this and aren't embarrassed about it, send your comments/suggestions (and death threats) to *Wizard* and somehow your letter will get forwarded to me. I also need to know if you would like to see a favorite alternative comic or creator featured (I'm afraid that I might run out of ideas pretty soon.) If so, just include it in your letter. Thanks! ■

Recommended Reading

DC- Moore worked on *Swamp Thing* from issue 20 through issue 64. Two books collecting his work have been published by DC. *Saga of the Swamp Thing* contains issues 21 through 27. *Love and Death* contains issues 28 through 34 as well as the second annual. Both *Watchmen* and *V For Vendetta* have been collected and are kept in print by DC.



SWAMP THING #64
© 1992 DC Comics

Pictopia - This collaboration with Donald Simpson and others was originally published in *Anything Goes* #2 and was reprinted in the first volume of *The Best Comics of the Decade* from Fantagraphics. The two-volume set is packed with work from just about every major alternative cartoonist and is still available by writing to Fantagraphics at 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

Marvelman - Originally serialized in England in *Warrior* magazine, this series was collected, colored and continued by Eclipse as *Miracleman* (to avoid a lawsuit). Moore wrote the first sixteen issues, which have been collected into three books, *A Dream of Flying*, *The Red King Syndrome*, and *Olympus*.

From Hell - In collaboration with Eddie Campbell, this novel is currently serialized in quarterly editions of *Taboo* from Spider Baby and Tundra. Along with the original story, the collected edition of *From Hell* contains Moore's notes and comments. It (as well as copies of *Taboo*) can be obtained from Tundra at 320 Riverside Dr., Northampton, MA 01060.

Lost Girls - The eight page chapters are being serialized in color in *Taboo*, with collected editions to be issued from Tundra when enough material has been published.

Aargh! - This gay rights benefit book was the first publication from Moore's Mad Love (Publishing) Ltd. It sold out rather quickly and is a little hard to find nowadays.

Big Numbers - The first issue was published by Mad Love in August of 1990. Bill Sienkiewicz has completed the third and his former assistant Al Columbia is scheduled to finish the twelve-issue series. When enough issues are done, Mad Love plans to resume publication in association with Tundra.

Raw - Alan Moore collaborated with Mark Beyer on a short color story in the third and latest volume of *Raw*. Copies may be obtained from Catalan Communications at 49 East 19th Street, New York, NY 10003.

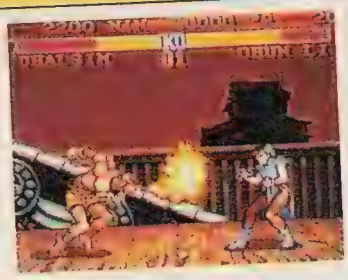
16-BIT POWER

by Craig Cornell

HINT BOX

Streetfighter II

Always start the round off by doing a shoulder throw or whatever close attack your character does; it's almost guaranteed. Also, listen to your opponent — the computer says "sonic boom" or whatever when a special attack is coming. This gives you a chance to jump or launch one of your own.



Use your Yoga Flame and burn 'em!

GRAPHICS

SOUND

CHALLENGE

CONTROL

FUN

OVERALL QUALITY

Hello again everyone, and welcome back to 16 Bit Power, the straightaway review place to go. You get reviews of games that are out now for 16-bit systems. They're rated on graphics, fun, sound FX, challenge, and overall quality, all on the Rocco Rating System. Five Roccos means it's fantastic, one Rocco means it's a funky fungus. (Half points start after one Rocco.) All this from a fellow gamer who'll tell it like it is , so start up your VG-system and let's rock!

Starting off with a bang (or a solid uppercut) is Streetfighter II, one of the new ones for the Super-NES. And what a game this is. Capcom, the makers, didn't spare anything in the transfer from the arcade to the home video game. In fact, if you have a giant screen TV, there's little difference. There are only eight fighters to choose from, but this game is so much fun you'll spend hours just playing with each. Unfortunately, it will take hours just to figure out exactly what it is you're doing. Have no fear though, the game's moves are such that if you just screw around with the controller, you'll get results. You can play in either Game Start mode or Vs. mode. The Game Start mode is against the computer, while in the Vs. mode you can play against a friend (or an enemy). To learn how to do the moves, the instructions say to fight on Level 0 in fight mode. I suggest picking the Vs. mode and just playing by yourself to get the hang of it. Once you've got a few moves under your belt, try the 0 Level trick. The fighters react differently in different situations. For example, they do different kicks depending on whether your opponent is in close or further away. So the Vs. trick is just for beginners. The looks of this cart are damn good! The familiar fighters look the same as they did in the arcade, only smaller. (Although the machine I played on had a gigantic TV screen about five feet away from the control panel.) The graphics run smoothly for the most part. Game play has been preserved too. The only difference that jumps out is

Try Ryu's Dragon Punch and destroy your competition!

the choppy background animation. It's poor; really nothing special. The sound FX are average , but the voices are kinda wimpy, nothing awesome like Mike Haggar in Final Fight. Yet, once you start playing you hardly notice the backgrounds — they're more for your friends to watch while they're waiting to play! And waiting, and waiting, and waiting...

There are zillions of moves, and each fighter has its own (but except for Ryu and Ken they're pretty much the same). The guys at Capcom designed a great controller, by the way--they didn't waste any buttons. (If only someone would make a wrestling game like that — hint, hint!!!) Since each fighter does different moves after you do the same controller action, mastering them all could take years! However, if you still remember the arcade moves, you're set. Just getting used to what each one does what is a little hard. After getting the hang of it, this game is seriously addicting. Once I got a feel for it, I played it for four hours straight. I thought my bladder would explode, but I wanted to beat one more fighter, just one more...So next time you're got some extra cash and you're lookin' to buy a game, get a hold of StreetFighter II — if you can find it!

The second game I got to look at was Alisia Dragoon by Sega for the Genesis. In spite of the odd name and the overused theme, this is a decent arcade action game, with a pinch of fantasy for good measure. You play Alisia, who's out for revenge against the Prince Of All Things Evil. Impressive name, but we've heard it before. Your weapon is the Thunder Magic, which looks like lightning, that can search out your enemies. Aside from enemy-seeking lightning, you can call on the aid of four different monsters to fight by your side. A dragon, a giant fire ball, a floating lizard with boomerangs on its back to attack with, and an eagle-like bird with floating energy spheres that it can explode to hurt enemies. The cart looks nice and has fairly good animation, nice backgrounds that scroll, and easy-to-use controls. Your modes of attack are kinda limited; you just face right or left and the lightning does the rest. The monsters attack on their own, so you don't have to worry. If the monster is getting its butt kicked or isn't doing squat to help, you can summon a different one. That's one of the tricks, getting to know what each monster can do and when it's most effective to use it. The animation has a distinct Japanese flavor, which is okay, just too noticeable. I never cared for that kind of art; it all looks alike to me, no joke. The bosses are totally forgettable (I'm having trouble remembering them now!), and are way too easy to beat. The racks in general are pretty simple, and finding the secret goodies strewn about ain't too hard either. With no time limit, you can wander all you want. Sound FX here are debilitating to the game — they have no ooooomph! The scream Alisia makes when hit is just silly. I don't know about the rest of you folks, but I I like to get into the character in the games I play. And if all I get is a squealing wuss, then that drags the game down. Challenging this game is easy; I was up to the second to last rack after a couple of hours. The last two racks took awhile to get through.

All in all, the game is fun, and good for some straightforward gameplay. It's one of those games where you can play it after you finish it, 'cause ya get to go around and kick butt! ■

Your Thunder Magic seeks out your enemies!

HINT BOX

Alisia Dragoon

Your Thunder Magic can break through walls where items are hidden. There's usually a magic power-up hidden in those places. Don't miss one or you'll suffer on later racks! Monster hint: The fireball is the hardest to use; it moves behind you. So if you're being attacked , you must turn around to use it. When you do turn around, the fireball goes over your head in a big arc before moving in right behind you. This can be used as an attack!

GRAPHICS

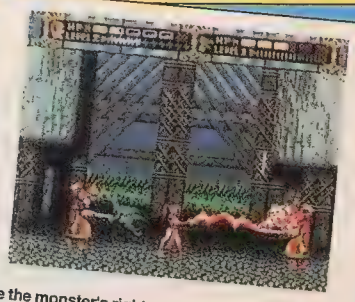
SOUND

CHALLENGE

CONTROL

FUN

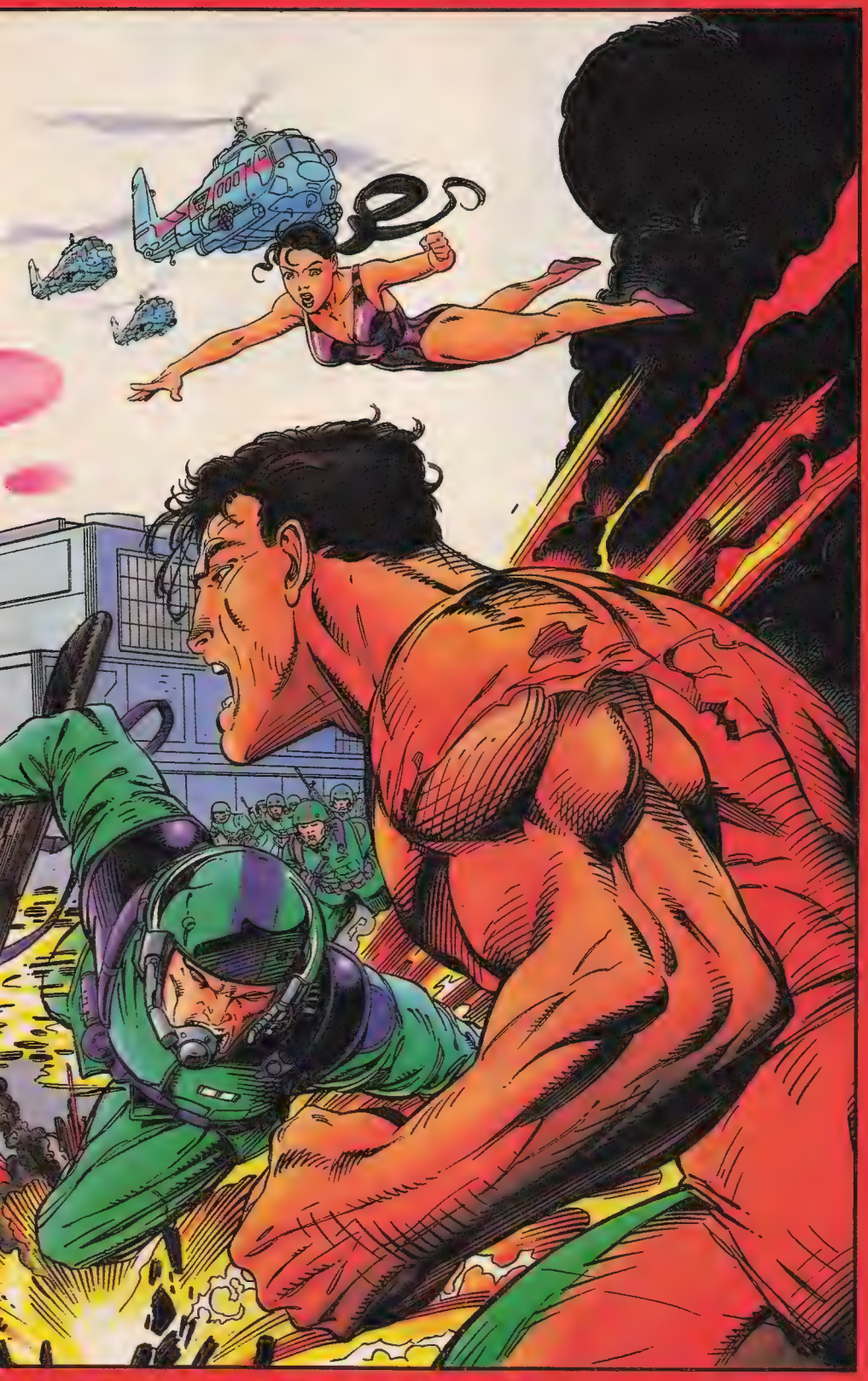
OVERALL QUALITY



Use the monster's right and there's no stopping you!

WITH A JIM LEE GATEFOLD COVER

Plotted by David Michelinie and Bob Layton, Scripted by David Michelinie, Penciled by David Lapham, Inked by Bob Layton, and Colored by David Chlystek



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BRUTES & BABES

DRAWING POWERFUL COMICS WITH

BART SEARS

Hello, welcome to BRUTES AND BABES. In this, the fifth segment, I thought that it was about time to get to the heart of drawing powerful comics, it was time to talk about storytelling. So...buckle up and let's get to it!

Storytelling

It's a bit pretentious of me to sit here and teach storytelling to you when there are masters of it out there (Joe Kubert and Will Eisner, to name two) to whom I would be grateful to learn a fraction of what they've forgotten. But, that notwithstanding, I'll plod ahead and we'll see what happens...

The art of telling a story with pictures must be clear and readable, you cannot confuse the reader, things must flow smoothly. Panel to panel, page to page, your picture should create a rhythm, slowing down and speeding up the pace of the story to carry the reader along precisely as you and the writer intend. The way you pose your characters must appear believable, as must the way these characters interact with each other and their environments. You can't confuse the reader as to who's who (costumes don't count) by switching people around the panel indiscriminately. Now, to make all this even tougher, you have to find a way to do this which builds tension, drama, and mood, and is just plain knockout-exciting! That's storytelling--in short.

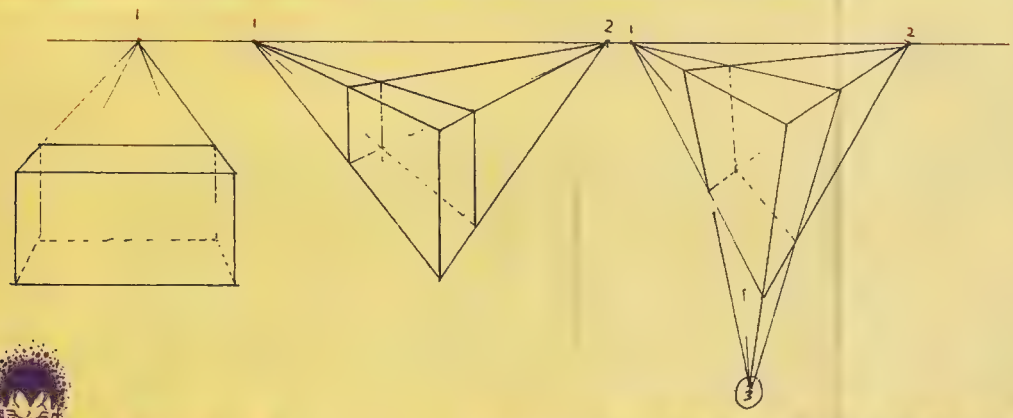
Perspective

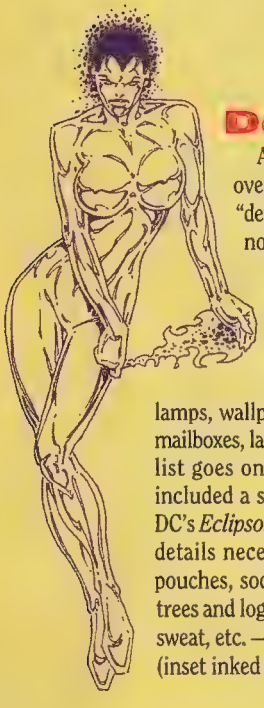
Everything has perspective. Everything you could ever want to draw, from cars to horses, from buildings to oceans, from alien worlds to spacecraft to plain old superheroes. It could be a very flat perspective or a very warped, dynamic perspective, such as in the shot of Babe, drawn here to the left. When drawing a person in such an extreme perspective, many body parts are covered by other body parts closer to the viewer (the viewer being whoever is looking at the drawing). When drawing a figure in this type of perspective, we refer to it as foreshortening.

One, Two, and Three-Point Perspective

Wherever you are sitting or standing, if you could look outwards and see the curve of the earth you would be seeing what is called the horizon line, also known as the eye-level line. This is the line to which all one and two-point perspectives you will ever draw must flow. (Or almost all; when we cover perspective in more depth, you'll see what I mean.) There could conceivably be one vanishing point (the spot to which the perspective lines meet along the horizon line) or thousands of vanishing points in each and every drawing that you design.

Let's say we have a box. If we draw the box so that only the vertical lines are parallel, then we have a two-point perspective. If we draw the box so that no lines are parallel, then we have a three-point perspective (notice that the third point, the point that all the vertical lines recede to, is an arbitrary point NOT located on the horizon line — see figure 3). Note: STUDY THIS AND PRACTICE . . . YOU MUST KNOW PERSPECTIVE TO DRAW COMICS. (I'll go more in depth on this subject in later articles.)





Detail

A very important (and often overlooked) element is detail. By "detail" I don't mean a lot of noodly nonsensical lines to fill space, but the correct dressing for the world your characters inhabit, such as proper windows, floor moldings, doors, door handles, cars, trucks, light switches, lamps, wallpaper, end tables, books, pens, mailboxes, lamp posts, fences, signs, etc. The list goes on and on. As an example, I've included a section here from page one of DC's *Eclipso: The Darkness Within*. All the details necessary are there: the belt and pouches, socks, machete, canteen, broken trees and logs, little animals, fungus, vines, sweat, etc. — it creates a very clear picture (inset inked by Randy Elliot).

Eclipso: The Darkness Within™ & © 1992 DC Comics.

Proportion

Proportion, as always, deals with the way two or more objects (or parts of objects) relate to one another in size and position. Note the drawings to the left. . . see how in the second drawing the soda can seems to be much too big for the hand, but in the first drawing everything appears juuuuust right. Now this is a very simplistic illustration, but I hope it makes my point. If you find you have trouble drawing things to their proper scale, don't hesitate to find the object to see just how small or large it is in relation to your hand (or whatever) or your Dad's; always check things out, make a point of seeing how things relate to other things.

Layout and Design

Now here are a few quick pointers on laying out and designing the interiors of your panels.

1. Never make the center of your panel the point of interest.
2. Never cut off a corner.
3. Never cut off an arm at the elbow or hand.
4. Never cut off a leg at the knee or ankle.
5. Do divide your panel into thirds both ways and do place your center of interest on one of the conjunctions of these lines.
6. A point of interest is: a head, a spaceship, the major figure, etc.

The "Brute" Plot

What follows is a simple five-panel plot, which an artist may receive from a writer.

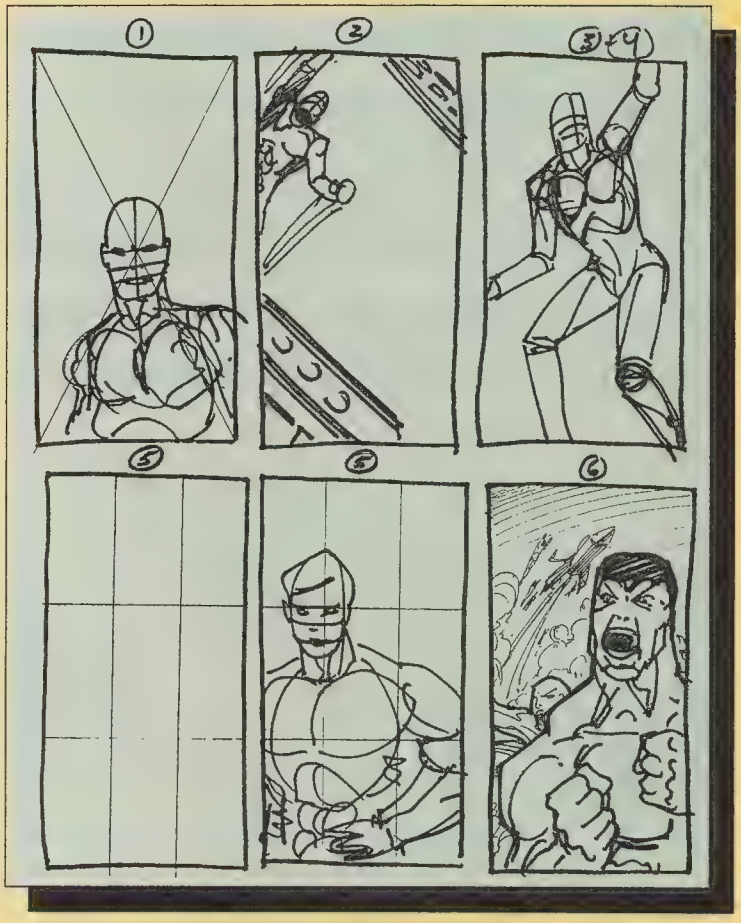
Panel One: Medium-Long Shot — Brute standing on a cracked concrete surface — a testing ground for a high tech, super-secret laboratory. On the ground beneath him is rubble, and strewn throughout the debris are the broken, twisted bodies of high-tech guards. . .

Panel Two: Medium Close-Up — Sensing something behind him, Brute whips his head around, angered, the energy about his head crackling.

Panel Three: Full Figure Shot — from behind Brute as he faces off against Major Villain, (Note: please design villain any way you like, but with very little metal in his costume; I'd like something that looks very different from Brute) who is floating unafraid a few feet off the ground, confident in his power, gloating.

Panel Four: Close-Up — Brute, yelling angrily, fists clenched, energy power arcing dangerously from his fists to his head.

Panel Five: Medium-Shot — from behind Major Villain as he unleashes his awesome power full force into Brute, who is obviously hurt, but it is unclear just how badly.



Now sit down with pencil in hand and draw this page of the Brute plot. Remember, the image area on a professional comic page is ten inches by fifteen inches, long side vertical. Use any pencil that you like, but I would suggest a 2h lead and a ruler for straight lines. GOOD LUCK!

Next month in Brutes and Babes, I'll walk you through, step by step, with my solutions to the above plot. From layout through finished pencils, I'll give you the hows and whys, and you'll see each step as I've completed it. Thanks for reading and above all — have fun! Now you've got a lot of work to do so I won't keep you any longer. See you next month. Till then... KEEP DRAWING! ■

Let me see what you can do! Send your version of the "Brute" plot to...

Brutes & Babes
c/o Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet NY
10954-0648

COMICS ON

Welcome back to our newly expanded Hollywood Heroes column! Each month, I'll be here, keeping you up-to-date on the hottest TV and film news, as it relates to the world of comics, science fiction, horror, and animation! You'll get lots of news here before it's printed anywhere else, plus you'll continue to get in-depth coverage of major subjects.

Last issue we began our expanded Hollywood Heroes feature with a comprehensive run-down on all the television news you want to know. This month, we move on to the big screen for a glimpse of the movies to come your way over the next year or two! So, what is coming our way? Read on.

Feature Films

No major news on James Cameron's *Spider-Man* project for Carolco. Its fate is still up in the air, although Cameron will most likely use that film to finish off his Carolco contract. . . if the company lasts that long. Menachem Golan, who owns the movie rights, insisted in the press recently that the film would be made, with a projected $40 million budget. Carolco's Alan Hirschfield says that both *Spider-Man* and *Terminator III* are in development for 1993, as long as the money doesn't run out. Carolco's actively seeking financing for the 93-94 period.

Cameron has followed Oliver Stone and jumped the sinking Carolco ship to sign a five-year deal with 20th Century Fox to produce twelve films and direct four of them. Cameron walked away from the agreement with approximately $500 million guaranteed for his use over the contract period! He'll also have total creative control over the films, an almost unheard-of deal in Hollywood. Whether Cameron will bring the *X-Men* feature he's been planning on producing over with him from Carolco has not been decided yet. Cameron's next film, *The Crowded Room*, for Fox, was negotiated and signed before this agreement, and thus, is not included. That film, however, has been delayed, and Cameron may start work on *Spider-Man*.

For those still excited by the *completely untrue* rumors that *Spider-Man* has been cast with Michael Beihn as Peter Parker/Spider-Man, Arnold Schwarzenegger as Doctor Octopus, and Jack Nicholson as the Green Goblin, let me reiterate in simple terms. No script exists. The movie has no start date. Carolco may go broke. Cameron may leave Carolco. No stars this big will sign to a film without a script. Even Stan Lee laughed at these rumors. The casting above is dream casting, nothing more.

Carolco's potential collapse puts another comic book property in jeopardy. *Mai, the Psychic Girl*, has been developed with Carolco money. To be directed by Tim Burton, the film was scripted by Larry Wilson and Caroline Thompson (*Addams Family, Edward Scissorhands*). The film will be a musical, with music and songs by synth-pop group Sparks. Also, in the film, Mai will be American, not Japanese.

Wilson and Thompson are also working with Paul Chadwick on the script for *Concrete*, to be directed by Wilson for Largo Entertainment, as well as the script for *Mid*

SCREEN

Knight, a Columbia film which will star Michael Jackson as a star-spanning cyborg super-hero! *Batman* designer Anton Furst was to design the latter film; no replacement has been named since his suicide earlier this year. However, *MidKnight* is having more problems, and even Bubbles the Chimp can't help. Sony's reportedly not happy with the Thompson/Wilson script, and is asking for major revisions.

Caroline Thompson is working solo with Tim Burton, whose next project after Batman Returns will be the musical *Sweeney Todd*. Thompson is also writing and directing *Rouge*, a Japanese supernatural romance story, for Fox. Larry Wilson is also making a solo career stretch. He's been named the new scripter on Warner and Amblin's Plastic Man film, for a potential Christmas 93 release! Rumors around Hollywood have said that Michael Jackson (Plastic Surgery Man) approached producer Steven Spielberg about the Plastic Man role (twice!), but he's thinking more about Bruce Willis in the part! What happened to Paul Reubens (Pee-Wee Herman)? Dark Horse's film deal with Largo Entertainment includes not only the afore-mentioned *Concrete*, but also *Time Cop*, to be produced by *Evil Dead's* Sam Raimi and Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson.

Bill Bixby has said that he'd like to do a new *Hulk* movie, but the rights are reportedly up for negotiation. His co-star, Lou Ferrigno, has also gone back into the world of professional body-building, and has said he won't be doing any movie or TV work for at least a year.

Ilya Salkind recently spoke about *Superman V*, saying that they were planning on going back to the beginning and starting from scratch, including the cast. Even Lois Lane won't be spared. Still, Salkind is hoping to get a certain 39 year-old actor back in the tights. "We've been talking to Christopher Reeve, and it's possible he might reprise his role." Salkind later told the *New York Daily News* that Reeve had agreed to the role, but wouldn't confirm or deny that to me when I called his office. The film is budgeted at $40 million, is scripted by comics veteran Cary Bates, and is supposed to start filming in January. Unfortunately, the Salkinds had bankruptcy papers drawn up recently due to problems on their beleaguered *Christopher Columbus* film. So far, they're still afloat, but I'll keep you informed.

In *Superman: The New Movie* (fifth in the series), Superman is shrunk and de-powered by "an evil alien wielding magnetic shields." Earlier reports had said that Brainiac would be the villain, and this fits his modus operandi. Chris Reeve's office did not return calls, but he said in a recent interview that "The real truth of the matter from my point of view is the only reason to make *Superman V* is if you could absolutely knock people out. Until and unless somebody would spend the money and the time and the talent to assemble the ingredients for that knock-out movie, I really wouldn't want to do it, because the last one was such a disappointment."

First scripted by *Batman*'s Sam Hamm for *Brazil* director Terry Gilliam, then rewritten by Gilliam, then dropped by Gilliam, then picked up by *Flash* and *Rocketeer* men Danny Bilson and Paul DeMeo, Largo Entertainment's *The Watchmen* is totally without a home now. Bilson and DeMeo quit the scripting job and have not been replaced.

Bernd Eichinger's Neue Constantin Films still has the *Fantasic Four* and *Silver Surfer* films in "active development," but doesn't see a start date for at least a year, possibly two. They've also recently started development on a live-action *Prince Valiant* movie.

On the Silver Pictures front, here's an update: *Green Lantern*, *Judge Dredd*, and *Rogue Trooper* have been completely dropped, *The American* is waiting for a new script, *V For Vendetta* is in a "holding pattern," *Sgt. Rock* has been rewritten by Ebbe Roe Smith and has once again gained Arnold Schwarzennegger's interest, and *Richie Rich*, written by Neil Tolkin, is in negotiations with with Macaulay Culkin.

Another child star-to-be may be found soon thanks to a national talent search. Writer/producer John Hughes wanted a fresh-faced young actor to play *Dennis The Menace* in his upcoming film, directed by Patrick Read Johnson. Warner Brothers accepted videos and photos for a ten-day period in June, and the role's winner is expected to be announced soon. Filming starts this September in Chicago, with the role of Mister Wilson played by Walter Matthau.

Ridley Scott will produce the animated Moebius film, *Starwatcher*, for Odyssey Distributors, but not direct it as originally announced. Scott worked with Moebius on *BladeRunner*, and his name guaranteed a big-studio release of the film. Paramount has already promised distribution of the pic, which has already started production in France. Moebius and Keith Ingham will direct.

Sean Young, ultra vocal about her desire for the role of Catwoman in *Batman Returns*, may have the last meow. After appearances on *Joan Rivers*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Hard Copy*, *Dennis Miller*, and *One on One with John Tesh*, she caught the eyes of Batfilm producers Ben Melniker and Michael Uslan. The two were looking for a sassy actress to play the role of old-time Good Girl super-heroine, the *Black Cat*, and they found it in Sean Young. She will portray the motorcycle-driving Harvey heroine, who's secretly bored Hollywood stuntwoman Linda Turner, in the medium-budget film which starts filming early next year! With Black Cat's costume looking remarkably similar to the Catwoman costume Sean wore on the air, it would almost seem as if Young had planned the whole scenario . . . but that would be too bizarre, even for Hollywood. John Paragon (Jambi on *Pee-Wee's Playhouse*) will direct.

Castle Communications' new film, *The Black Panther*, is not Marvel's character. It's about a serial killer. Don't get excited. But look for exciting news next month, as we get the inside scoop on Wesley Snipes in Columbia's *Black Panther* project!

From the Stan Lee file of Marvel projects which have been optioned but may never be destined to make into the screen come: *The Black Panther* (Columbia), *Elektra: Assassin* (Tri-Star), *Dr. Strange* (being fought over by Ed Pressman and Francis Ford Coppola), *Ghost Rider* (Columbia), *Luke Cage* (Ed Pressman), *The X-Men* (Roland Joffe — but what about Cameron?), *The Incredible Hulk* (Universal), *Blade the Vampire Hunter*, and. . . supposedly. . . a big-budget *Punisher*? Let me reiterate that an option only means that someone has paid money to have the exclusive rights to make a film using these characters. It is no guarantee that they will ever be made.

Though one adult magazine recently talked about Brigette Nielsen's "most recent film disaster, *She-Hulk*," the Marvel movie is in heavy limbo. After several scripts and treatments were turned in, US funding could not be found for the proposed film (though overseas funding was in place). Brigette has moved on to other things, including *OO Kid* with Corey Haim and John Rhyes Davies, which appears to be some kind of *James Bond* spoof. Joy.

Speaking of busty women, work is apparently proceeding on The Film Company's two Americomics tie-in films, *Dawn Hunter*, and *FemForce, the Movie*. Lois Hamilton is playing the title role of *Dawn Hunter*, a sultry super spy. The film is preparing for lensing in St. Petersburg, Russia, and John Beuchler is directing, from a script by Sandra Willard, Mike Frankovich, Jr., and Buechler. The $11-million film is co-financed by Russian investors, and produced by both Hamilton and Frankovich. Beuchler, who is a noted Hollywood makeup artist and director of *Friday the 13th Part 7*, will also be illustrating a *Dawn Hunter* story co-written by Frankovich, for *FemForce #52*.

Sexy star Sybil Danning is among those who recognize Frankovich's name. Frankovich had created a sultry super spy named Black Diamond, and approached Danning about taking on the role in connection with an Americomics series called *Sybil Danning is Black Diamond*. Danning left the project and was later sued by Frankovich, who has now gotten Lois Hamilton, a new blond action starlet-to-be, to take the *similar* role of *Dawn Hunter*. Comparisons of the black leather bodysuit designs for Black Diamond and Dawn Hunter are inevitable when looking at the production drawings.

PERFECT CASTING places Bruce Willis as PLAS . . . But will it fall into place?

The Film Company is also accepting photos of women from all over the country as audition photos for *FemForce, The Movie*. Americomics owner Bill Black is co-producing and writing the film with Frankovich. Lois Hamilton is also co-producing. According to a letter Frankovich sent me in early May, actress Sharon Blair may have been cast as the villainess, Synn (it's not confirmed whether she *has* the role or not). *FemForce* is also planned for filming in Russia and Yugoslavia!

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III began filming June 15th, right here in my home state of Oregon. In Astoria, to be exact, which is where *Kindergarten Cop* was shot.

Stuart Gillard not only directs the film, but scripted it as well! Guess this means he won't be bitching about his script being butchered by the director. The script reportedly features time-travel elements. New Line Cinema will distribute,for an Easter 1993 premiere.

Turtles co-creator Kevin Eastman has signed a very lucrative contract with Limelight Productions. He will develop movie and TV projects there for the next five years. He brings with him 10 TV and two theatrical projects he's developed at Tundra Publishing. One can be reasonably certain none of them are *Bratpack* or *Taboo*.

New Line is also filming a live-action version of another cartoon team, the *Toxic Crusaders*. This semi-big budget film will see the return to the big screen of low-budget hero Toxic Avenger.

For those not in the know, Christopher Walken's character in *Batman Returns*, Max Schreck, is named after the actor who played Nosferatu in the classic vampire film.

Wesley Strick isn't too happy these days. Though he appealed to get co-writing credit on *Batman Returns*, the Writer's Guild gave sole credit to Daniel Waters. Strick, who made major changes in the Penguin storyline, squawked, but there was nothing he could do.

John Carpenter and his writer wife Sandy King are putting things into motion at Universal for their remake of the 1954 *Creature from the Black Lagoon*.

Paramount has begun work on the script for an *Addams Family* sequel. Some cast members of the first film have expressed doubt that they'd appear in a second film.

In vampire news, David Geffen has asked Anne Rice to write her own adaptation of *Interview With A Vampire*, after a score of Michael Cristofer drafts failed to net a big-name director.

Another famous vampire, Barnabas Collins, may make it to the big screen soon. New Line is planning a *Dark Shadows* feature film which creator Dan Curtis would write and direct.

Dark Horse is co-producing a horror film called *Dr. Giggles*, which is raising a little Hell while it films here in Portland, Oregon. Neighbors are strenuously objecting to the 9:30-to-dawn filming which utilizes kleig lights and to over 80 crew members next door to trying-to-sleep households. As if the lights and motor noise weren't bad enough, neighbors say that screaming teenagers, Dr. Giggles' prey, will bother their sleep, not to mention a planned fireball explosion as Dr. Giggles' house blows up. Dark Horse had no comment when a local newspaper columnist talked about the film.

Joel Schumacher, who was back on the film version of *Phantom of the Opera*, has exited again over "creative differences" with Andrew Lloyd Webber. Schumacher left the project once; Franco Zeffirelli took over and left also, and Schumacher came back again.

Anthony Edwards and *Terminator 2*'s Eddie Furlong headline the cast of *Pet Sematary II*, directed in Georgia by Mary Lambert for an August release. The second film is based on elements from Stephen King's book, but not on the story itself. Ditto for the already-completed *Children of the Corn II* from Dimension and Miramax.

Another Stephen King film, *Needful Things*, is almost set to go before the cameras. It will be directed by Peter Yates, from a script by W.D. Richter, for New Line Cinema for release late this year or 1993.

Besides the above films, here's the latest update on Stephen King films: *The Talisman*, a King/Peter Straub story is being written by Richard LaGravenese for producer Steven Spielberg, *The Mangler* from producer Gimel Everett (who just brought us *The Lawnmower Man*), *Needful Things*, produced by Rob Reiner, directed by Peter Yates, and scripted by Larry Cohen and W.D. Richter, and *Thinner*, scripted by Michael McDowell for Tom Holland to direct (Holland's polishing the script) from Laurel Entertainment. Orion Pictures' *The Dark Half*, directed by George Romero, and starring Timothy Hutton, is still languishing ion a shelf due to financial troubles. Laurel also owns the rights to *The Langoliers* (from *Four Past Midnight*), and may make it for a cable audience, as well as *The NightFlier* (on hold), *Creepshow 3* (they're searching for animators to animate the film), and *Tales From The Darkside The Movie 2* (on indefinite hold). Remember that ABC-TV has both *The Stand* and *TommyKnockers* on their schedule.

"SCREAMING TEENAGERS . . . will bother their sleep, not to mention a planned fireball explosion as DR. GIGGLES house blows up"

Bernard Rose's *CandyMan*, based on a Clive Barker short story, stars Virginia Madsen as a grad student who unintentionally revives the ghost of the CandyMan, a Chicago serial killer. Tony Todd also stars, in the $8 million picture from Manifesto Films.

B-Man is an in-production film about a group of ethics researchers (what?) turned super-heroes. It's from Coho-Signal Communications, and will be directed by company president Tony Hubner and Bill Kirksey. Tim Kirkpatrick plays B-Man/Brent Bentley, with his youthful Black partner Bluebird/Robert Barnswallow, played by Robert Alexander. Jacinto Riddick is Robert's brother, Buster, while Janifer Dumas plays the nasty villainess, Karen Kravin Koward, head of a leveraged buy-out firm.

B-Man started as a spoof on a certain popular superhero, but soon became an original social satire/comedy. According to a company spokesperson, B-Man is "postmodern superheroes waging a war against assholeness, greed, and self-centered 80's things." Expecting to be finished with the film by the end of summer, the company is looking for major theatrical release.

I've now confirmed that Damon Wayans directs and co-stars with brother Keenan Ivory Wayans in a superhero parody film *Blankman*, filming later this year. Perhaps they'll co-star brother Marlon Wayans as the little-sidekick-that-couldn't, in a nod to his losing the role of Robin in *Batman Returns*.

20th Century Fox is wooing Andrew Lloyd Webber to create an animated *Dr. Seuss* musical film. They would co-produce with Lightmotive, who own the film rights to all of Seuss's material. Fox is also distributing *Beyond The Yellow Dragons* (formerly called *Once Upon A Forest)*, another animated musical from David Kirschner and Hanna-Barbera, due in 1993.

Hanna-Barbera and 20th Century Fox are next collaborating on a $27 million animated film called

SEAN YOUNG will portray the motorcle driving Harley Heroine.

Pagemaster. It's written and produced by H-B CEO David Kirschner, and will be directed by former Disney animator, Maurice Hunt. The story tells of a boy who's turned into a cartoon and is sent into adventures in a library's fiction section. A high-profile vocal cast is expected.

Robin Williams will be the voice of *Aladdin* in Disney's upcoming animated comedy-musical film, due out this Fall. Among Williams' other possible roles is the lead in a live-action *Dudley DoRight* film. *Aladdin* will feature an entirely computer-generated character (a first for Disney), the flying carpet. Another Disney film about lost toys is being produced entirely on computer by Pixar, and is due out in late 1994.

The animated version of *Cats*, to have been produced by Stephen Spielberg, has been killed.

Universal is preparing an animated musical film about dinosaurs, called *We're Back*. Expect a brontosaurus or two in your neighborhood soon. Steven Spielberg is producing this 1993 film.

Don Bluth has begun work on *The Pebble and the Penguin*, an animated film he's working on in Ireland. Tim Curry, June Foray, and Martin Short are among the voices.

Bill Kroyer, who made *Ferngully*, is working with action producer Joel Silver on an animated action film called *Arrow*. The Warner pic is described as a hard-boiled detective story.

John Landis will direct *Sinbad*, a feature-length animated film from first-time producer Michael Franck.

Nelvana will be producing an untitled animated film with director Tim Burton in the next eighteen months, as well as a big-screen adaptation of Al Capp's detective spoof, *Fearless Fosdick*.

The eagerly-awaited Edgar Rice Burroughs film, *The Princess of Mars*, may have to wait a bit longer. Director John McTiernan left the Cinergi/ Disney project after the problems he faced with Disney on *Medicine Man*.

Once Upon A Time in the Universe is the title of a big-budget new science fiction thriller that Paramount is developing. Written by Scott Roberts, it will be co-produced by Robert Watts.

Stacy Haiduk fans can look for her in a film called *Crazy Joe*, now filming in Los Angeles. It's directed by Nathan Christian from a script by ex-*Spider-Man* writer Joseph Goldman and Bert Sheekman. Maybe now she can renew her romance with ex-*Superboy* John Haymes Newton, who's starring as a kickboxing ex-cop in *Desert Hawk: American Kung Fu* for 21st Century, directed by Isaac Florentine. Both films are produced by Menahem Golan for his 21st Century Films company.

A third remake of *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers* is on its way, directed by Abel Ferrara, and written by comic fan Stuart Gordon. Cast members include Meg Tilly and a bunch of people I've never heard of, including Gabrielle Anwar, Terry Kinney, and Billy Wirth.

More genre sequels are in the offing. Look for *Warlock II* (possibly with Julian Sands), *Frogtown II* (vs. the Flying Texas Rocket Rangers), and *Amityville 1992* (subtitled "It's About Time". For what? Another tired retread of a crappy ghost story?).

Still on the remake trail is a new version of *Forbidden Planet* (now a comic series from Innovation), planned as a $35 million film from Republic Pictures International.

Michael Caine will star as Scrooge in *A Muppet Christmas Carol, which was to begin* filming this summer in London. Disney will release the Brian Henson-helmed picture (when else?) at Christmas.

Warner Brothers is trying to buy the rights to *Wild, Wild West* from CBS, to make a big-budget feature film. The project is reportedly set for Mel Gibson to star as James T. West, under the direction of *Superman*'s Richard Donner and screenwriter Shane Black. A new TV series spin-off is also in negotiations.

Isaac Asimov's famous *Foundation* trilogy has been acquired by Tri-Star. A film trilogy is planned, to be produced by Chuck Roven and Bob Cavello. The second *Foundation* book trilogy (including the soon-to-be-published *Forward The Foundation*) are not optioned, but Tri-Star has first rights.

Bob Hoskins won the coveted role (NOT!) of the dumpy Mario Brother in Tri-Star's new live-action *Super Mario Brothers* feature film. Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel are directing (they need two directors?) from a script by Barry Morrow, based on the Nintendo game. Danny DeVito was up for the role, but he apparently went on to other projects. Wonder what?

Believe it or not, Hollywood's whispering about the possible new star of the live-action *G.I. Joe*, now on Warner's slate of product. Sylvester Stallone is said to be interested. I guess he's trying to escape that typecasting thing. A live-action *G.I. Joe* TV series is in development as well. Hoorah.

Also in the muscle scene, Arnold Schwarzenegger is *The Last Action Hero* is Columbia's newest movie, written by Shane Black. Lawrence Kasdan looks likely to direct this one. Schwarzenegger's definitely *not* doing *Spider-Man*, though *Sgt. Rock* is once again off in the future, as are *Curious George* (based on the children's books), *Oh, Baby* (in which Arnie would play a pregnant man), and a comedy/tragedy called *Time Flies*.

Jim Henson Productions and Francis Ford Coppolla will join together to produce a live-action *Pinocchio* film for Warner Brothers. Frank Galati will adapt his script from Carlo Collodi's original book.

In an interview on ABC's Good Morning America, George Lucas talked about the next trilogy of *Star Wars*

movies. "I've got the stories," Lucas said. "It's just a matter of having the energy and the interest to tell them. Sometime in the next five or six years."

There's no word when the long-completed *Robocop 3* will be released by the nearly-bankrupt Orion Pictures.

Some premiere dates to mark on your calendar: The undead start walking again in late July with Sam Raimi's *Army of Darkness: Evil Dead III* (with accompanying Dark Horse Evil Dead comic series), Rutger Hauer in *Buffy*, the *Vampire Slayer*, Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* sucking blood on August 14th, and *Pinhead's* return in *Hellraiser III: Hell On Earth* in late August. Other genre films coming up are David Lynch's Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me on August 23rd, Pet Sematary II on August 28th, and the "final" Friday the 13th film on Friday, November 13th, from New Line Cinema.

Video Releases

Hope you caught the long-delayed long-dreaded Captain America video on July 22nd from RCA/Columbia. The 103-minute American version is longer than the 94-minute version released worldwide. Great! More bad movie footage for your money!

Though a Flash reunion movie is not in the cards, watch your video stores this summer. The pilot film and the two-part Trickster combo will both be released by Warner Home Video. It's also likely that the Nightshade two-parter will show up later in the year. Pet Fly says that there is no new footage in the Flash videos (or in their foreign counterparts), but that some scenes in the Nightshade compilation may be rearranged. The 94-minute pilot came out July 15.

Best Film and Video also released their next set of Marvel Super-Heroes videos in August. The set includes: *Spider-Man* "Revenge of the Green Goblin;" *Captain America* "Return of Captain America" and "Zemo and the Masters of Evil;" *Incredible Hulk* "The Origin of the Hulk"; *Iron Man* "The Other Iron Man" and "Cliff of Doom;" *Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends* "Spidey Goes Hollywood;" *Fantastic Four* "The Olympics of Space;" *X-Men* "Pryde of the X-Men"; and, if *Robocop 3* is released, *Robocop* in two volumes with "Crime Wave" and "A Robot's Revenge."

THE FLASH tripped up, and even special guest stars and awesome special effects couldn't keep him on his feet.

Disney will release their tremendous blockbuster, *Beauty and the Beast* on video, October 30th, at the sell-through price of $24.99!

If you're very good this Christmas, Warner plans on bringing you the *Batman Returns* video. No firm date or price has been set until the movie is declared a hit or a flop.

Jim Henson Productions and Walt Disney Company finally made a deal regarding video rights to the various Muppet properties. The videos will be released by Buena Vista Home Video under the Jim Henson Home Video label. The first releases seem likely for Fall. Disney now owns the rights to *The Muppet Show, Muppet Babies*, all the Muppet films, and *The Dark Crystal*.

A New York cable show called *The Chronic Rift* sent me a catalogue and some information recently. Their show covers comics, sci-fi, fantasy, and horror. You can find out more, or order videotape copies by writing to The Chronic Rift, PO Box 2224, NY, NY, 10185-0023. Tell them I sent you. No, I'm serious. Tell them.

This is a long shot, but check your video stores for *Death to the PeeWee Squad*, from Troma Pictures. This low-budgeter was produced, written, and directed by none other than comic legend Neal Adams! Not only that, but the two main kids in the film are played by his own brood, Zeea and Jason Adams. From the small movie poster I have a reproduction of, it also appears to feature Gray Morrow and Denys Cowan. Made in 1987, it features the memorable tag-line "They were too young to vote, but old enough to save the world!" True trash from the comic world!

Theme Parks

Universal Studios Hollywood is opening a *Rocky and Bullwinkle* live show, plus "The Beetlejuice Graveyard Revue!" The Florida Studios will add both shows, plus "American Tail: Fievel's Playland."

At the Australian Warner Brothers theme park, they've opened up a top-secret *Batman* project. *The Batman Adventure* finds tourists being captured by the Penguin. It's up to the other tourists to help Batman and his sidekick, Oliver (Alfred's nephew), to help defeat the dirty bird. The three main characters appear on video only, shot by director Hoyt Yeatman. He filmed the segments during the last days of filming on *Batman Returns*, on the sets in Burbank. Though the real costumes and makeup for the characters are used, neither Keaton nor DeVito play the Batman or Penguin roles in the production. The lookalikes are very close though. Make your vacation plans now!

Meanwhile, here in the States, if you're planning a trip to any Six Flags theme park, you may be bat-surprised. All the parks will have *Batman Returns* tie-ins, with the Gurnee, Illinois park showcasing *Batman: The Ride*. The Arlington, Texas and California parks will be opening *The Batman Stunt Show* as well. ■

RAGE, RAGE AGAINST THE DYING OF THE LIGHT

By Vinnie Bartilucci

That's what DC's hereoes were crying this summer as they confronted the master of darkness, Eclipso.

ECLIPSO On the whole, the only people who remember Eclipso are the older comics fans who recall his adventures from the 1960s. He's made a few appearances over the years, but this year he's graduating to the big time. He's the primary threat in this summer's DC Annual crossover, *Eclipso: The Darkness Within.*

"That's one of his appeals—because he is relatively obscure, it gives us the opportunity to build him, or rebuild him, into a character that's right for the '90s," says editor Michael Eury. "If we were to do more traditional Eclipso stories, they probably wouldn't last very long. But we're starting with a character that has some recognizability with the older fans—and that always helps."

"Basically we get to have our cake and eat it too," he notes. "We got to re-create Eclipso, but not ignore all those stories. They all 'happened'—we even have a few flashbacks to those Alex Toth stories. It's very hard to make a major villain out of a guy who used to wince in fear when you held up a camera with a flashbulb at him. In fact, he'd probably eat the camera and spit out the pieces."

Now he's a major villain," Eury continues. "He could probably kick Darkseid's butt. We'll probably never mention this, but in our backstory we establish that he is on par with Darkseid, and on occasion Darkseid will drop in on Eclipso's castle on the moon, and they play chess together. Darkseid is about the only creature that Eclipso would consider worthy of his time. Everybody else is just a flea."

Eclipso has had many different things said about him in various stories. For a while he was supposed to be a Lord of Chaos; he was in Starman recently. Which is the truth? "Basically, Eclipso has purposely misled people for years, " Eury explains. "He did hang out with the Lords of Chaos for a while, but he's probably more powerful than all of them combined."

Eury says the Starman appearance and plans for the crossover pretty much happened concurrently. "We will do things in the crossover that will refer to that appearance, and Starman is involved," he points out. "He's a major player in the crossover. Just 'cause his book's getting cancelled doesn't mean we're going to forget the character. As a matter of fact, I'd like the crossover to give us the footing to reintroduce Starman in a slightly different light—no pun intended. I think Starman would have done much better if we would had put him in the Justice League early on, to give him more mainstream exposure.

The notion was to let the character stand on his own, which is a good notion, but the cross-pollination, the cohesiveness of the DC Universe will help a new character. As you know, there's a lot of books out there, and anything you can do to get something new noticed, you have to do."

Okay—but what about all those other Eclipso stories? Are all of them still in the canon? "There are some bad Eclipso stories which I'd like to pretend didn't happen...but they did." Eury chuckles. "We're not throwing anything out, we're making them work. But again, we're not focusing on Eclipso then, we're focusing on Eclipso now. We learn that everything that happened in the past happened, but Eclipso, being a master manipulator, misled Bruce Gordon and the DC readers for years. And he made everyone think his powers are far less formidable then they are."

In addition to the level of his powers, the whole way the reader sees Eclipso will change. "We are going to learn early on in the monthly series (more about this later) that Eclipso is a banished angel. He's been around for a long time. The Great Flood? That was Eclipso. He got carried away. He's real powerful. He's not the type of villain that ties you to a chair and says "Here's what I'm going to do to you, but first here's my plan...'He'll just say, 'You're tied to a chair—bye!' and rip your lungs out. He's vicious, he doesn't have a redeeming factor, he'd do great in Washington. He's above all that 'demon hierarchy' stuff, to. He's so vain, that if he were going to challenge anybody—and we could never do this, this is one character you'll never see in comics—he'd go after God."

New to Eclipso's power arsenal is the ability to possess people, or as it's called in the crossover, "Eclipso" people. "Remember that black diamond that Eclipso shoots his eyebeams with? Well, we find out in the prologue of the first bookend issue that he was trapped because the diamonds were fused into one giant gem, called the Heart of Darkness," Eury explains. "There's this mythical story about the Heart of Darkness, that anyone who owns the diamond will turn bad. But then someone else comes along and says no, it just brings out the badness inside of you...'The Darkness within.' Basically an explorer finds the giant diamond and has it cut up. And once it's cut up, the magic around it changes. Once it's cut into a thousand pieces, Eclipso is free to appear, using the diamonds as a conduit. Also, they become pretty much indestructible. I doubt Superman could crush one".

"In the annuals, there are diamonds floating around the world," he goes on. "Eclipso's after the strongest superheroes. He wants to do with them whatever he will: He could use them as his army, he could just possess them and get them out of the way. In each annual, the heroes are manipulated, either by people or the situation, to become angry. Anger, rage, vengeance—these base emotions are invitations for Eclipso to take you over. So if you have a black Eclipso diamond, it's night, and you get angry— you're gone. Eclipso becomes the dominant personality, so if a thousand people have been taken over, they all have a group mind. By the end of the annuals, most of our most powerful heroes have been taken over, so they've got their own powers, and Eclipso's. And the host body's personality is com-pletely submerged, there's nothing there to fight."

Before the power of *Eclipso*, even the mightiest of earth hero's will fall.

ECLIPSO: *The Darkness Within* will cross through a total of 18 annuals this summer: *Superman: The Man of Steel, Green Lantern, Detective Comics, Superman, Justice League America, Damon, Green Arrow, Flash, Action Comics, Hawkworld, Batman, Deathstroke, New Titans, L.E.G.I.O.N. '92, Justice League Europe, Wonder Woman, Robin, and*

Adventures of Superman.

Unlike last year's *Armageddon: 2001*, this year's cross over does seem to have an internal order to it; the books do need to be read in something of an order. "They're not necessarily numbered in order, but it would be a good idea to read them in the order they come out," Eury advises. "They will not be numbered or anything, because of the simple fact that one might come out late. But we're working real hard right now to make sure they ship on time."

The Dark God of Vengence has a monthly series in the works.

Who will win? Who will lose? Who will live? Who will perish?

(At least one character will die in *E:TDW*, and a few will be really worse for the wear.) "That's the one bad thing of the final punch of the last bookend," Eury admits, "We have a monthly series debuting two weeks after the final issue. Obviously, he ain't dead. However there's a resolution in that final issue that will keep everybody satisfied. Everybody, except for two characters (Bruce Gordon and one other), thinks Eclipso is dead."

As Eury notes, debuting after the end of the crossover is a new monthly book featuring Eclipso himself. Plots will be by Keith Giffen, Robert Loren Fleming will handle the dialogue, and art will be by Bart Sears and Randy Elliott.

"With the Eclipso monthly, we shift our slant from superheroes to horror," Eury says. "It's still well within the DC universe. We're trying to do a book that will appeal to the readers of both Superman and Sandman. It's got that dark nature, but we're placing it well within the DC universe. The first few issues place Eclipso in South America dealing with drug kingpins. Eclipso has plans to do stuff all over the world—he's just not going to stop until the world is his.

"One thing that's interesting about the Eclipso book is that we're doing a monthly book starrring a villain. That's almost never been done. DC did The Joker in the 1970s, Marvel had Super-Villain Team-Up, but really there's never been a time where we just gave a super-villain a book and let him go off. Eclipso is 'the star' of his own monthly book, but I would say Burce Gordon is the protagonist, the hero." [It should be noted, for history's sake, that Marvel's Tomb of Dracula was certainly a monthly comic with a villain as the 'star'.]

"Bruce Gordon is more of a threat to Eclipso that Superman is," Eury points out, "because even though Superman is a living solar battery, Dr. Gordon is the master of solar energy. That makes him the Van Helsing to Eclipso's Dracula. Eclipso'spowers are light based—that's his only weakness. Remember all those stories where he only came out during an eclipse? Uh-uh. He just has to wait for the sun to go away. He's very much like a vampire. But when there is an eclipse, which is what he's trying to arrange in the final bookend., his powers are even greater. If he can pitch the world into darkness, no one can ever dream of stopping him.

"The monthly is going to be a more personal book. Occasionally there will be guest stars—we're talking about the Challengers of the Unknown making an appearance, Amanda Waller will be joining the cast for a short time."

So does this mean that Eclipso and Bruce Gordon will become separate beings in the near future? "Well, all this time, Eclipso has led us to believe all this time that he is Gordon's dark side," Eury says. "He's not: Eclipso is Eclipso. There's a scene in the first crossover issue where Gordon turns almost white, and says, 'Everything I've believed for all these years is a lie.'"

What sort of threat is Eclipso to the heroes?

Eury puts it succinctly: "Keith Giffen has remarked that in every other crossover, the heroes join together to fight some event, gods fighting, Earths merging, whatever. But this time, Eclipso has possessed them, he's manipulated them, he's thrown them around like toys. They're in his castle and they can't fight him there—he's just too powerful for them in his domain. And they turn tail and run. He's got them running all over the place. This is the first time where we've got a crossover where the heroes are literally running for their lives." ■

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X-OVERS

Always wanted to see **Wolverine** vs. **Archangel**, or how about **X-Factor** vs. **X-Force**? Well, the only way you're going to see your favorite ***Marvel*** characters butt heads is in their much-hyped crossover series, or where the **Mutants** are concerned, **X-OVERS**.

"Fall of the Mutants" Checklist

- New Mutants #59
- Uncanny X-Men #225
- X-Factor #24
- New Mutants #60
- Power Pack #35
- Uncanny X-Men #226
- X-Factor #25
- Daredevil #252
- Captain America #339
- New Mutants #61
- Uncanny X-Men #227
- X-Factor #26
- Fantastic Four #312

One of the things that defines Marvel is its annual crossover storylines, most notably the mutant crossovers. Once a year, Marvel's mighty mutants engage in all sorts of mayhem with aliens, demons, androids, other superhero teams and, most importantly, each other.

The first major storyline involving the mutants was entitled "The Fall of the Mutants," and spotlighted current X-Factor nemesis Mr. Sinister, and his team of mutant-killing Marauders. The storyline decimated the sewer-dwelling Morlocks and completely revamped the X-Men team. Nightcrawler and Kitty Pryde left the team, and Psylocke, Havok, and Longshot became full-fledged members. Warren Worthington III, a.k.a. the Angel, found himself trans-

All Characters Shown Here ™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

formed from the wimpy grade B character into the metallic-winged fan-favorite known as Archangel, courtesy of *X-Factor* villain Apocalypse. Interesting to note is that this series crossed over into several *non*-mutant titles such as *Daredevil* and *Thor*, something that would soon change, as the mutant crossovers became exclusive to the mutant titles.

Following the success of "The Fall of the Mutants" came "Inferno," a story involving close to four times as many titles as did "Fall." Spilling into the pages of *Amazing Spider-Man, The Avengers,* and dozens more, the storyline revolved around a horde of otherworldly demons led by a particularly unpleasant individual by the name of the Nastirh, bent on the conquest of Earth. Unleashing supernatural forces into New York caused the Big Apple to become even more dangerous than it normally is, as everyday people were transformed into hideous murdering creatures, who blended in nicely with the regular populous of New York. Though it took Marvel's mightiest heroes working individually to maintain order, Marvel's head mutant teams (the Uncanny X-Men and X-Factor) had to team together to defeat the demonic clone of Jean Grey (Madelyne Pryor), and thoroughly vanquish the demon folk. During the course of the series, Illyana Rasputain (sister to the X-Men's Colossus) reverts back to her child form, having been subjected to "insta-growth" at the hands of the demon Belasco in *Uncanny X-Men* #160. This also marked the last time any books other than mutant titles were used in a mutant crossover.

Next came "The X-Tinction Agenda," which really shook the Marvel X-Universe. The bulk of the story took place in a land called Genosha, a place where the Mutants (or "Gene-jokes" as the Genoshans called them) are enslaved by the "normal" humans who run the country. Seeing the American X-Men as enemies of their nation because of an earlier altercation between themselves and the team, the Genoshans track the X-Men down to their Westchester County headquarters and succeed in capturing a big chunk of the team and bringing them back to Genosha, to be enslaved there as punishment for their crimes. This, needless to say, brings the other mutant teams (X-Factor and the New Mutants) into play, bringing about the seldom-used "Super Team vs. A Country" plot. You'd imagine the country would win. During this nine-part crossover, some major events occurred. First off, New Mutants member Warlock, a techo-organic alien and fan-favorite character was killed, team member Wolfsbane's werewolf-like abilities were forever altered, and the groundwork was set

"Inferno" Checklist

- X-Terminators #1
- X-Terminators #2
- Avengers #298
- Power Pack #42
- Uncanny X-Men #239
- Terminators #3
- X-Factor #35
- Daredevil #262
- New Mutants #71
- Amazing Spider-Man #311
- Avengers #299
- Uncanny X-Men #240
- Fantastic Four #322
- Power Pack #43
- Spectacular Spider-Man #146
- X-Factor #36
- Terminators #4
- Daredevil #263
- Web of Spiderman #47
- New Mutants #72
- Amazing Spider-Man #312
- Avengers #300
- Uncanny X-Men#241
- Fantastic Four #323
- Spectacular Spider-Man #147
- X-Factor #37
- Excalibur #6
- Web of Spider-Man #48
- Amazing Spider-Man #313
- New Mutants #73
- Power Pack #44
- Uncanny X-Men #242
- Fantastic Four #324
- X-Factor #38
- Spectacular Spider-Man #148
- Daredevil #265
- Excalibur #7
- Cloak and Dagger (3rd) #4
- Uncanny X-Men #243
- X-Factor #39

Some of the most significant changes in Marvel's Mutant line of books have occurred during their various crossover series.

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"X-Tinction Agenda" Checklist

Uncanny X-Men #270
New Mutants #95
X-Factor #60
Uncanny X-Men #271
New Mutants #96
X-Factor #61
Uncanny X-Men #272
New Mutants #97
X-Factor #62

"X-Euctioners Song" Checklist

Uncanny X-Men #294
X-Factor #84
X-Men #14
X-Force #16
Uncanny X-Men #295
X-Factor #85
X-Men #15
X-Force #17
Uncanny X-Men #296
X-Factor #86
X-Men #16
X-Force #18

for the "death" of the entire New Mutants team, and their transformation and re-birth in the pages of *X-Force*. Cameron Hodge, the man largely responsible for the creation of *Archangel*, also returned for this series. Now, thanks to the demonic powers of Nastirh, the demon lord of the "Inferno" series, Hodge was an immortal, with an enormous mechanical scorpion-like body which he used to try to bring about the end of the X-Men. Hodge seemingly met his maker at the end of the series.

This brings us to the Fall of 1992, and the biggest and boldest mutant crossover yet. Entitled "The X-Ecutioner's Song," the series touches all four mutant titles, and is kicked off by the two-issue *Cable* mini-series "Highlord," with deals with Cable quitting as leader of X-Force and his relationship with Stryfe, as well as revealing Stryfe's plans for human and mutant-kind. The first chapter that actually bears an "X-Ecutioner's Song" logo is *Uncanny X-Men* #294, a shocker of a story. Prof. Xavier is shot in the head with a techno-virus bullet while attending an amnesty concert, and the assassin appears to be none other than Cable himself! To add more bad news to the hole in the good professor's head, Scott Summers and Jean Grey are kidnapped by the Horsemen of Apocalypse, sending most of the X-teams into action, looking for any clues. Wondering why *most* instead of *all*? For starters, the government-sponsored mutant team, X-Factor, is ordered to bring in X-Force because of their connection to Cable, and without Cable's leadership, X-Force is overpowered and arrested by X-Factor. X-Men and Uncanny team members Wolverine and Bishop team up to hunt down Cable, and won't let anything stand in their way. The Mutant Liberation Front, the terrorist organization led by Stryfe, will finally be destroyed during the course of the story, and readers will finally begin to understand who Stryfe is, why he looks exactly like Cable, and what his motives are. To further generate popularity for the 12-part series, Marvel has worked out a deal with Skybox International, the producers of the incredibly popular Marvel, DC and X-Men trading cards to produce an all-new 12-card set exclusively for the "X-Ecutioner's Song–series," which will come polybagged-one per issue for the duration of the series.

In far-reaching effects, Marvel promises that the repercussions of the "X-Ecutioner's Song" will be felt far in the future, so if you're an X-Fan, or even if you're not and you just want a cool story, check out "The X-Ecutioner's Song," on sale this month. ■

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Bring oven mitts to your local comics store this fall, as the "X-Ecutioners Song" promises to be the year's hottest new storyline.

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Mutants and Titans and More—Oh My! Fast-rising artist and writer Art Thibert tests his mettle on high-profile projects involving the X-Men and Nightwing.

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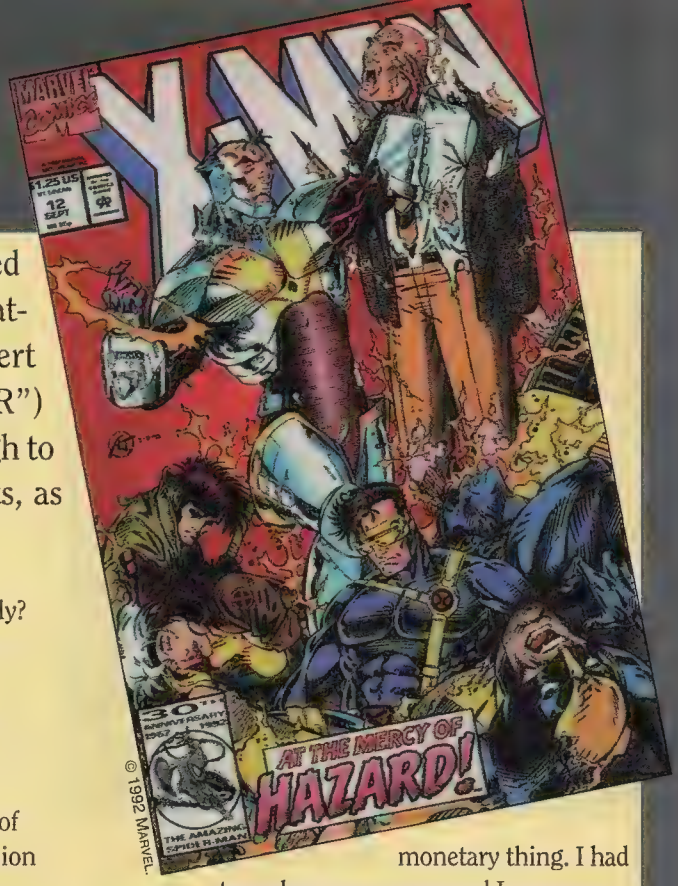
Thibert & O'Neill

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Pressed for time as he struggled to meet his deadline for the latest issue of *X-Men*, Art Thibert (pronounced "Tee-BEAR") allowed Wizard to intrude long enough to explore his past and current projects, as well as his prospects for the future.



WIZARD: Where are you from originally?

ART THIBERT: I'm a native Californian.

WIZARD: Not a lot of those, not in the comics business, anyway. Most seem to have migrated out there.

THIBERT: There's a whole new wave of us out here now. We call it the West Coast Invasion or the West Coast Look—the Homage guys, me, some others.

WIZARD: Have you had formal art training?

THIBERT: Just some junior college stuff...life drawing, things of that nature. No formal art school training. I did it for four years on and off. Other than that, I'm self-taught.

WIZARD: Was that training done with the goal of working in comics? Or did you have another part of the art field in mind?

THIBERT: Actually, at the time, I was actively pursuing music as a career. Art was a second love. I'd always read comics as a kid, and I met up with some people in the business and it seemed like a viable way of making a living, which was very important at the time.

I started doing some side projects for independent publishers, and it took off. That made the music take a back seat. I guess it came down to monetary values...having to make a living. Not very romantic, I guess.

WIZARD: What was your first published stuff?

THIBERT: It was at WaRP Graphics. My first mainstream stuff was penciling three issues of Warlord for DC. I started off as a penciler, I did some *Teen Titans Spotlight*, and then I did the eight issues of DC's *Time Masters* maxi series.

Then I started breaking into inking—again as a monetary thing. I had to make more money and I was very slow as a penciler at the time. I knew I could ink twice as fast; so I started inking just so I could live.

WIZARD: Your inking style fits into a whole slew of people—Jim Lee, Scott Williams, Whilce Portacio, Rob Liefeld's in there someplace, too—all of whom have a similar technique. Is that just coincidence?

THIBERT:: The West Coast Look!

WIZARD: Did you see what other people were doing and like it and think, "I can do that, too?"

THIBERT: When I was doing Superman, I really paid attention to what all those people were doing, and realized that—if I ever worked for Marvel—those were the guys I'd want to work with. Up front, I paid attention to their work. As an inker, I've inked Walt Simonson, and Jim, and Whilce, and even Rob—and whenever I ink somebody I try to pay attention to their style; if they have an established style, I try to stick close to that.

After a while, I started to develop my own style within the confines of that general look; pretty soon, we all just fed off each other.

WIZARD: When you approach a page, as a penciler, working from a plot or a script, do you start designing at the page level or are you more interested in the individual panels?

THIBERT: I'm not sure I understand the question.

"Initially, I was scared to death... this was a big bang for me."

WIZARD: Interviewing artists, I've come across two different approaches: Some artists talk about looking at each page as a total structure; others think the important thing is to make each individual panel work, without worrying about the structure of the page as a whole. I'm trying to find out where in that spectrum you tend to fall.

THIBERT: It's probably somewhere in the middle.

Let me see if I understand what you're saying: Some people have big panels with the other elements around it?

WIZARD: That's one part of it. It doesn't have to be that way precisely...but some work that way, others think in terms of what's needed to tell the story.

THIBERT: I try to get the big panels in and the big action—but, at the same time, not sacrifice the story content. That's still the most important part. If big panels get in the way of story content, then I stay away from them. I wouldn't use a big panel if I thought it compromised the story in any way.

So, I'd say I'm in the middle...or I'd like to think I am, anyway. [Laughter] Some people may say, "Oh, he's a big-panel guy," but I think I stay within the story confines and I try to favor the story as opposed to the design.

WIZARD: What are your current projects?

THIBERT:: Right now, I'm finishing up *X-Men* #13, which I'm penciling and inking. All the X-books are on an amazingly tight deadline. I started off with #12, which went pretty well, but it's starting to get tight with #13. Most of it comes like two to three weeks after I turn in the inked pages—that should give you an idea of how tight we're working here! My hat's off to Bob Harras for getting these books out every month.

WIZARD: I'm sure he'd love to get back to something resembling a normal schedule.

THIBERT: That's what he's trying to do now; he's got people like me as the buffer between Jim Lee's final issues and the beginning of Andy Kubert's stint.

WIZARD: So he has Andy working on what comes after you right now...

THIBERT: Putting him on a more normal two-month lead time.

WIZARD: How does it feel to come onto a title like *X-Men,* even briefly, following a popular stint by—first of all—a buddy, and the person who was one of the big drawing cards for the book?

THIBERT: Initially, I was scared to death. Not only because it's a big book and a lot of the people in the industry and the fans look at it, but because I hadn't picked up a pencil in three years. I had done pin-ups and stuff here and there, but I didn't have a monthly assignment, so this was a big bang for me. In addition, I wasn't just coming in as a penciler, but I was penciling and inking. I had a kind of stage fright for the first two weeks or so, but once I got over that, and seeing what I was doing, I realized it would stand on its own.

WIZARD: Your work is showing up in lots of places—*X-Men,* covers for DC's Superman titles—these days, in the comic-book industry, that's gotten to be unusual. The business has almost seen a return to the days of the 1960s, when each of the major companies had its own stable of talent.

Do you see it as just not wanting to tie yourself down?

THIBERT: I've never pledged my allegiance to a company, but to a person or an editor—someone I liked or felt comfortable with. Mike Carlin, the Superman editor, is a person I've always looked up to, and he did a lot for me in my early career. That's why I agreed to stay on the

WOLVERINE AND JUBILEE ™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"Marvel has offered me the ongoing Cable series, to start in the summer of '93, scripted by Fabian Nicieza."

Superman books, even if it's only covers. I really like Bob Harras; I think he does a tremendous job. I really like Jonathan Peterson at DC, with whom I've had a long-lasting relationship—even though I've never had anything come out from his office. That's why I'm doing *Nightwing* for him, coming out in December.

WIZARD: As long as you brought it up, is *Nightwing* still in process?

THIBERT: It's still in process, now; after I finish *X-Men* #13, then Pamela Winesetta, who is co-writing with me, and I will be starting on it full time. We already have the basic plot breakdown done for the four issues; next I'll start penciling, then we'll start scripting together.

WIZARD: This is your first real writing assignment?

THIBERT: Yeah—I get back into penciling--and somebody I'm writing, too!

Am I a nut or what?

WIZARD: Depends on how good you think you are.

THIBERT: We'll see.

WIZARD: You're tying into a line of books that have always been viewed as pretty writer-driven. Marv Wolfman has been the motivating force on the Titans material for so long.

THIBERT: He still is. At the beginning, I was a little skeptical, because what Pam and I were proposing was a plan to really shake up the character of Nightwing. At one point, I went out to lunch with Marv, to get his OK and his blessing. He was all for it; he was really excited about it. I hope we live up to the tradition.

WIZARD: What draws you to *Nightwing*?

THIBERT: It was a major challenge. Jonathan said he had an idea to launch his whole Titans invasion, and asked if I'd be interested in *Nightwing*. I said I'd get back to him, because I had to figure out if I had any affection for him and what I could bring to him. As I talked to Pam about it, we started coming up with ideas; it was amazing how we started going nuts with plans for a character I thought I had no thoughts about. So I told Jonathan I'd do it if Pam and I could write it.

He wasn't sure and asked us to send in a sample script and he thought it was great. It was official this time last year, so it's been a year in the making.

We got carte blanche to mess with the character—new costumes for both him and Starfire. Basically, we want to redefine Nightwing for the '90s. Bring him out of the "disco Elvis" look, at Pam calls it. We'll give him some high-tech equipment, things like that.

WIZARD: With the high profile you'll get from the *X-Men* and then the *Nightwing* project, how do you envision your future?

THIBERT: Marvel has offered me the ongoing *Cable* series, to start in the summer of '93, scripted by Fabian Nicieza. That gives us time to get some material in drawer, so to speak.

WIZARD: Do you ever see yourself in the same position as the Image founders were when they made the jump.?

THIBERT: It's hard to say. For me, if I'm happy with what I'm doing, that's what counts. The *Nightwing* series is a labor of love and I have an affection for Cable. If it works out that I get to that level and the readers like what I'm doing, it could happen. I'm just doing it for a kick right now.

I don't think of it in those terms. ■

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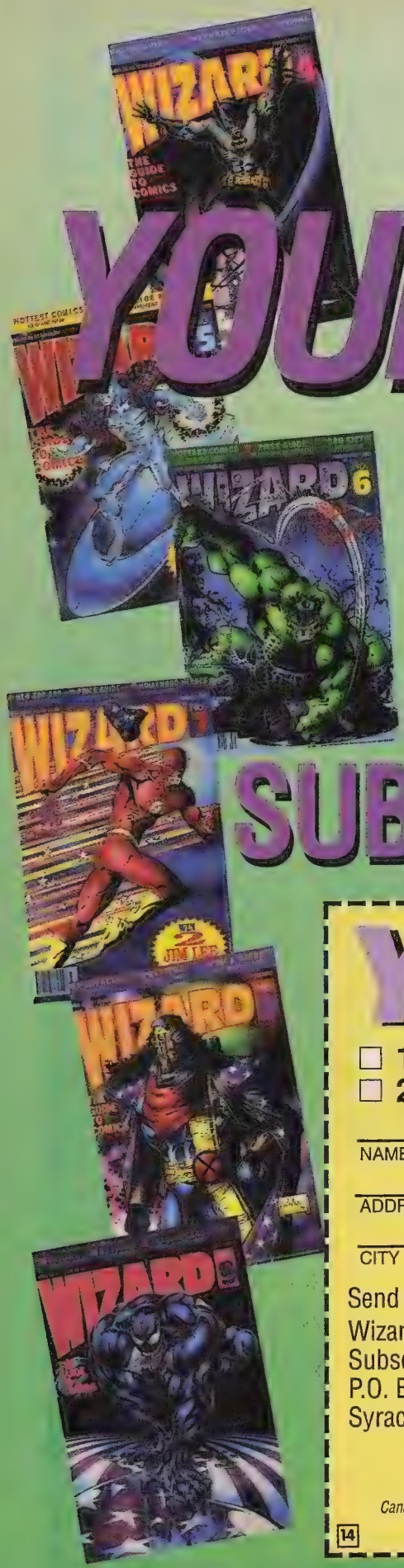

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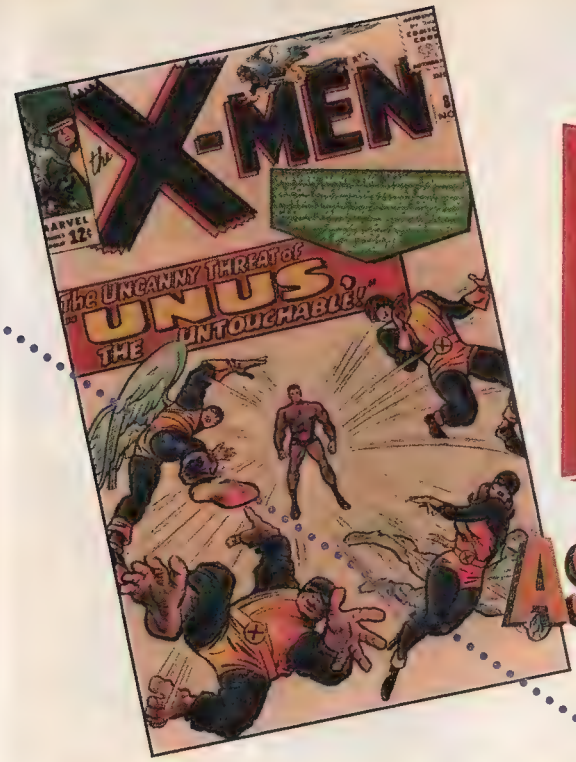
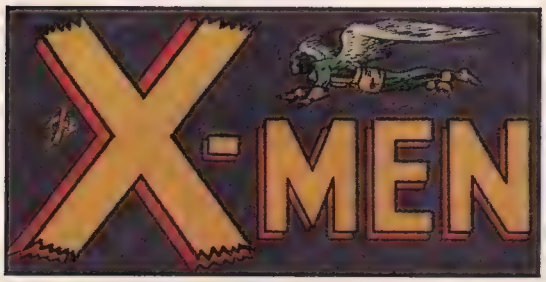


MUTANTS AS METHAPHOR

A look at nearly three decades of the X-Men.

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill



The title "Uncanny" didn't appear on the cover until issue #114, October 1978

Cyclops was the first recruit into the X-MEN, and is currently the team leader.

Mutants: In the Marvel Universe, they are a symbol, a stand-in, for all the **social outcasts** of the "real world." Blacks, Hispanics, gays, teenagers—name your oppressed minority and the **mutants** fit the bill. And for nearly 30 years, the **X-Men** have been the costumed defenders of mutants and mankind's protectors from the mutants who would attempt to use their special abilities to control their **"normal"** brethren.

In fact, back in September 1963, in (the original) *X-Men* #1—the adjective "uncanny" came much later—that second concept of good mutants vs. evil mutants was the book's primary theme. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby introduced Professor Charles Xavier and his five young "students"—Scott (Cyclops) Summers, Warren (Angel) Worthington, Hank (Beast) McCoy, Bobby (Iceman) Drake, and Jean (Marvel Girl) Grey— as a team to guard mankind against the likes of Magneto (who showed up in that very first issue) and his Brother-

At one point, the X-MEN were so unpopular that the series went into reprints

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Recognize the beast? The X-MEN have gone through major changes over the years

One of the best selling comic cards of all time was the X-MEN set of *SkyBox, Int.*

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hood of Evil Mutants (who joined the master of magnetism in *X-Men* #4). The idea that mankind would hate and distrust "Homo superior" would not come up until #8 ...and not become a dominant theme of the series until the introduction of those mutant-hunting giant robots, the Sentinels, in #14.

By that time, Kirby had passed on the penciling reins to Werner Roth (working originally under the pseudonym "Jay Gavin"). Roth had a background in romance comics and brought a very naturalistic touch to the characters—certainly Jean Grey never looked more lovely than in Roth's hands and he turned Warren Worthington into a soap-opera hero prototype. A few issues later, Lee surrendered the writing chores to Roy Thomas; the Thomas/Roth team would be the original X-Men's most consistent creators, staying together through #35—a two-year run, with just a few fill-ins along the way.

As an old time X-Men fan, this is my favorite period of the old series, filled with odd-ball villains and the team's first major "epic," the ten-issue conspiracy of Factor Three,. Unfortunately, it ended with a round-robin of artists and what may have been the series' biggest mistakes—dropping the team's uniforms for a set of costumes that eliminated the X-Men's distinctive appearance, and the apparent death of Professor X. Shortly after, the team "broke up" for an aborted series of solo and duo adventures, before reuniting in a story by Arnold Drake with art from then fan-favorite Jim Steranko. The fans' hopes for a revival of the sagging X-fortunes were dashed when Steranko left after just two issues, however.

The best was yet to come: In the midst of a plot that introduced Cyclops' brother Alex and the villain called the Living Pharoah/ Monolith, Neal Adams came in to join returning scripter Roy Thomas; they delivered nine issues of solid comics wonder (#56 through #65). It wasn't enough, though. After one more fill-in, the first run of *X-Men* came to a close. The series went into reprint soon after.

But the mutants were not be be forgottren. They quickly began making guest appearances in *Amazing Spider-Man, Marvel Team-Up, Avengers,* and *Captain America.* The Beast even got his own series in the pages of *Amazing Adventures,* beginning with #11... a series that transformed him into the furry version we know today. In time, the characters' popularity proved too much to ignore and a new team was formed.

The first appearance of the new "international" version of the students of Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters was in *Giant-Sized X-Men* #1. Nightcrawler, Storm, Wolverine, Banshee, Colossus

Unquestionably, Wolverine has become the force on the X-MEN, as well as one of *Marvel's hottest Heroes.*

Several members have already proven that even Death can't stop the X-MEN

and Thunderbird—led by Cyclops—rescue the originals (including Alex "Havok" Summers and Lorna "Polaris" Dane) from a living island. A few months later, they returned in *X-Men* #94—there had been some 28 issues of reprints. With Thunderbird's death, the team settled in for a long period of adventures, first in the hands of Chris Claremont and Dave Cockrum, then with Claremont and John Byrne. For many fans, this is the golden age of the second X-Men team, including the renowned "Dark Phoenix" saga, in which Jean Grey returns to the team only to sacrifice herself. Among the other important elements in the Claremont/Byrne run are the introduction of Professor Xavier's alien love, Lilandra of the Shi'ar, the space-going Starjammers, the addition of Kitty Pryde, the first meetings with Alpha Flight, and the return of a rejuvenated Magneto.

The months following Byrne's departure brought a new look at Magneto's motivations, a look that would eventually bring about his temporary reformation, Scott's marriage to Madelyne Pryor, and a new emphasis on Wolverine in the storylines. The number of X-related miniseries seemed to explode, as the mutants became the lynchpin of the Marvel Universe.

Eventually, Professor X began training young mutants again, in the pages of *New Mutants*, and the original team (including Jean Grey—guess she hadn't died after all) reformed as *X-Factor.* In the events of the massive crossover called "Inferno," all the various mutant teams finally met and straightened out their differences. Of course, by this time, Kitty and Nightcrawler were in England, with *Excalibur.* (Get your program, can't tell the players without a program!)

About a year ago, Chris Claremont—after 16 years as principal chronicler of the X-Men—bowed out of the book in an editorial dispute, just as the X-Men reunited into a massive team, combining the original five with the latest version of the "Uncanny" X-Men. The teams split into two series—one continuing the old numbering (now well into the 200s), the other beginning a new title, once again called simply *X-Men*...the first issue of which—thanks to Jim Lee's art and a cover that came in five variations—sold in the multi-millions.

Arguably, the X-Men are at the height of their popularity today. Can they sustain that popularity, in the wake of the departures of Claremont, Lee, and "Uncanny" artist Whilce Portacio? (Lee and Portacio are among the principals of Image Comics.) Well, once before, the mutants headquartered at Xavier's School were counted down and out...and proved all the experts wrong.

Perhaps that is their strongest lesson for the real outcasts of society—you can always come back. ■

All X-Men Characters, Comics and Indicia ™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

Neal Adams: Continuity's Founding Father

The respected artist and publisher discusses the future of Continuity Comics and the state of the industry.

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

In the late 1960s, the comic-book industry experienced a major influx of new, young, creative talent—the first such flood of "new blood" to the business since the period immediately after World War II. One of the most influential of those newcomers was Neal Adams, an artist who had already been successful in advertising and newspaper comic strips (Bat Materson and Ben Casey).

Settling in at DC Comics, Adams soon became the publisher's premier cover artist and then began work on a number of characters, setting a tone and style—eventually—for the whole company. After a first issue by Carmine Infantino, Adams was the seminal artist on Deadman in *Strange Adventures*, and he began a long association with Batman in the team-up title *The Brave and the Bold*. A few years later, with writer Denny O'Neil, he revamped Batman into today's familiar figure of the night and introduced "relevance" to comics with the celebrated (and oft-reprinted) *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* series.

He moved on to Marvel Comics where, working alongside Roy Thomas, he turned out what are arguably the finest versions of both *The Avengers* (in the first of Marvel's space-spanning epics, the Kree-Skrull War) and the original *X-Men*.

With the advent of the independent comics publishers, Adams formed his own company, Continuity Comics, producing not only comic books, but advertising work as well. We started the interview with a look at Continuity's current crop of titles.

Neal Adams: First, of course, we want to talk about CyberRad, because I'm so proud of the work of Peter Stone—who writes it with me—and of Richard Bennett—who is, in my opinion, something of a Jim Lee as far as a discovery is concerned. We've been tempted to print his stuff in black-and-white it's so good. If we just leave pages around, old professionals who come in will see them and just drool over them—it's fantastic inking work.

On *Crazyman*, we're passing it around a little bit between Tristan Shane and Dan Barry. To add a little twist to Barry's work, we have Bennett inking over it—so you'll see a very, very different Dan Barry. Dan has agreed to do further issues of Crazyman for us.

And, of course, Crazyman is *crazy*, which is what we like most about the book! [laughter]

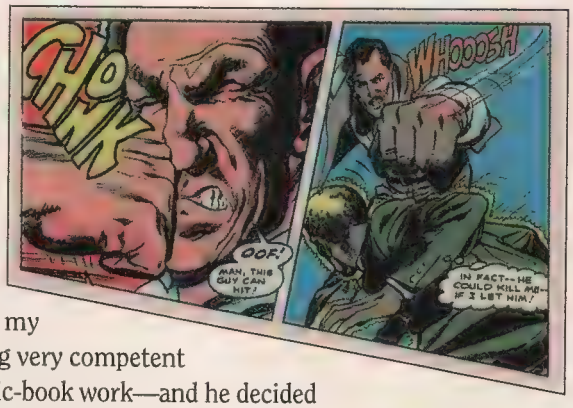
We've got Dwayne Turner on *Ms. Mystic*. Since I started this book, I feel very protective of it, and Duane is one of the few people I think are worthy of working on it. He works for Marvel on *Cage*, too, but around here, we don't make any comparisons. The stuff he does on *Ms. Mystic* is so superior to his *Cage* stuff, because it's very open and very dynamic and very wonderful. *Cage*, from our point of view, is kind of crowded and—we won't say it's badly inked, but it is a little funky.

For the *Bucky O'Hare* aficionados—and we have a few out there—we've got a new Michael Golden in the person of Andre Coates. Andre is a big fan of Golden's—a "walk a mile in my shoes" kind of fan—and now he doing *Bucky O'Hare.* I know the real superhero fans aren't all that interested in *Bucky O'Hare*, but for those who are interested in the Michael Golden style, it's great—I guess you'd call them the art people.

We're planning a sort of crossover surprise series on *Hybrids*—because we think *Hybrids* is our *X-Men* and we're putting a lot into it. We have Larry Stroman and Rich Buckler and myself doing penciling, a guy named Andrea Klasic doing some inking, and a few more surprises coming up. The crossover will start with two of our titles the first month, then go into three titles the next month, then four, then five—ending at the end of the year with a big crossover surprise. This is the first I've talked about this to the press.

We've spent the past week just talking it back and forth, really molding it into something big for us. We're very happy about it because we've really loved *Hybrids* and we've been trying to find a way to push them.

Mike Nasser and Sal Veluto are working on *Megalith* and I'm working with them. I'll be doing inking and some penciling.



Armor has Veluto and Brian Apthorp, who is very much an Al Williamson/Steve Rude kind of Artist. I had him working in my California studio doing very competent work—and some comic-book work—and he decided to dedicate himself to comics, full-time. We started him on *Armor* with a little trepidation, but he started turning out pencils that just totally blew us away.

Earth 4 is a title we canceled because it wasn't getting any attention, but now it will be coming out with a new artist, Walter McDaniels. McDaniels is—how can you say—not in the "Jim Lee mold." It's more like if you put Jim Lee with Jack Kirby and added big heads. We can't say we're fans of Walter, becuase he's too rough for us to be fans; we're just totally surprised every time he walks in with artwork, becuase it's so dynamic and, in some ways, so primitive, that it shocks us each time he comes in. He's really locked into the character of Urth and is turning him into a major character for us.

I'm talking about all these guys in glowing terms, but one of the things that's happending here at Continuity is that there are new, wonderful guys coming up and we have been surprised by a lot of it. Walter is one of those guys: I'm sure Marvel will be wanting him on *X-Men* sometine. We'll hold onto him for as long as we can, but I'm sure they are going to come courting him.

Wizard: It sounds like you've got some fairly impressive plans. It certainly sounds like a bigger menu than people remember or think of with Continuity.

Adams: Well, it is. We're going to push ourselves to the end of this year to the limit and move on from there. As we do these crossover things, and as we bring these characters together and mix-and-match them for a story I think people will really like, our schedule will be getting more regular.

People will start to see how many titles we have, and they'll start to see our presence grow from just a couple of books on the stand to four or five a month. That's what we want to see.

Wizard: That's enough to give you an identifiable presence, for people to see the logo and recognize the company?

Adams: Right. Actually, we've had a question around here about the Continuity name and logo. We've always felt that we burdened ourselves with this terrible name that nobody understands but, as times goes by, we hope people will remember our name simply because they like the stuff and know that it represents quality.

Wizard: It does seem that, within the last six months or so, Continuity has finally beaten the problem that was always the—

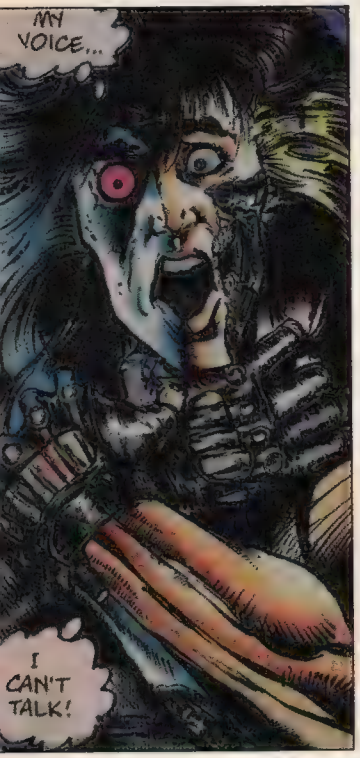
Adams: I would say we're in the process of beating the problem of maintaining the schedule.

Wizard: Somebody once joked to me that Continuity had the wrong name, that there never seemed to be any continuity.

Adams: [Laughter] Well, I think we have continuity; perhaps not continuity in scheduling, but in quality and in storytelling. Since there are so many areas, you have to hit the ones you care about the most. Unfortunately, economics don't necessar-

ily let you hit all of them. People think of Neal Adams as someone who, with all the riches garnered from Batman and Green Lantern/Green Arrow and his other projects at DC and Marvel, made a mountain of money and is dealing it out piece by piece while he publishes his comic books. Unfortunately, it's not quite that way.

We also set ourselves up differently from the other "alternative" publishers. "Alternative" to what I don't know—the Big Two, I guess, rapidly becoming the Big One. Anyway, most of the publishers have gone out and gotten financing from people outside the industry; we provided our own financing because we didn't want to be controlled by somebody on the outside telling us what to do and how we had to move forward and buy licensed products or things like that. We basically have tried to make it on our own while supporting ourselves with our other business. It's been a little rough go for us.



Wizard: So what has happened in the last several months that has put the scheduling on track?

Adams: We've gotten a little bit more money. *Bucky O'Hare* has helped us with that. We have a studio in California that's turned around for us and become a better money-making situation. So we've managed to accumulate a bit more so we can pay more people to do more jobs to get the work done. That's really what it boils down to, because we would have been way ahead of the game if we had a lot of money lying around and we could do whatever we wanted.

There certainly are people out there to do the work. Some people think that to get good talent you have to pay tremendous amounts of money, and it's not really true. In this business, people pretty much work for the same standard rates. And people seem to be willing to do a good job for me for some reason, so we've gotten very talented people to do good work.

But we haven't been able to finance it all that easily, so it's been much more sporadic than we would like it to be. In some ways, we're making more sacrifices now, but it's coming out a bit better. In addition, my daughter, Kris, has improved the organization of what's going one.

You know, when I started publishing, I wasn't necessarily intending to be a publisher—it just sort of worked out that way. If my goal was to be a publisher, to acquire money and to simply make that my business, we probably would have done it sooner and better. What we did was do it better—and now we're trying to do it sooner!

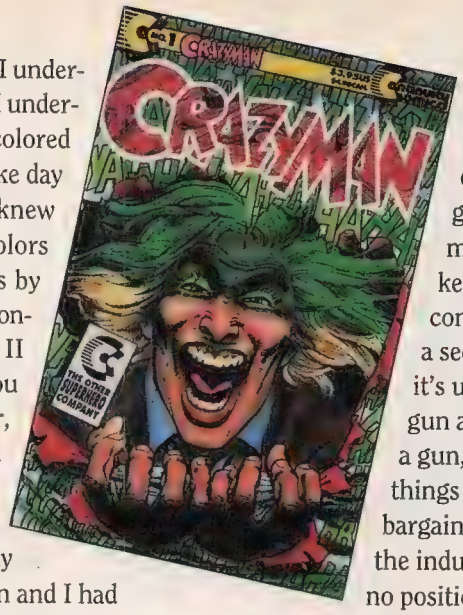
A lot of the things I used to say as a freelancer I now have the responsibility of making true; that we really want to have a quality line of books, that I don't think it's a good idea to turn out a lot of trash and just have a good comic here and there, that it's important to turn out good comic books and that every comic book ought to be thought of as a gem of a comic. We spend a lot of time finessing each book to make it as good as we can, rather than taking a hard-nosed attitude and saying, "Let's pump the stuff out there."

So the quality has gotten in our way as well, to a certain extent, in that we focus too much attention on it and we have a limited amount of money. Rather than focusing on the business and saying "Well, let's turn this thing out and spend less money on it," we have focused on other aspects. If the business comes first, you end up doing what I have seen a lot of other alternative comic-book companies do: They turn out a lot of bad comic books and sooner or later they go down the tubes. We intend to be in it for the long run. By making our standard "quality first," then working toward a schedule—although we hurt ourselves in many ways—we're coming in with a good product. We feel we did the right thing first.

Wizard: How would you characterize the changes in the industry in that quarter century?

Adams: To give you a rough idea, when I got into comic books they were in the stone age. I had had a syndicated comic strip and I worked in the commercial art field, the illustration field, I was out there among the real people. When I came into comic books, which I had always wanted to do—and the circumstances, which are long and drawn out and you don't really want to hear the story—I was really thrilled. But I was involved in a medium that was locked in 1942 and hadn't gotten out of that time. When I arrived it was as if I had burst upon the scene like a visitor from another planet. I knew

all these reproduction techniques, I understood what all the coloring meant, I understood that night scenes should be colored like night scenes and day scenes like day scenes! Little things like that. I knew there were certain tones to the colors and you could create *more* tones by mixing and matching, that certain concepts started during World War II were no longer necessary, that you could do overlays, and drop-in color, and harnd-colored covers, and painted covers, all of this stuff.



When I started doing some of this stuff in comic books, everybody thought it was like some revolution and I had invented it all. The comic-book business is very insular, so what I considered normal they can consider revolutionary, I was lost in tine, in effect.

So I did my stuff and I planted the seeds. As time went by more and more people who were fans of mine—and it's really hard to scratch a good comics artist today without finding a Neal Adams fan; I don't think it's arrogant to say that—came into the field and started to do things as I did them. They learned about reproduction techniques, about all the aspects of the business. They even were proud that they were comic-book artists! They fought for their rights, they fought for their rates. [Laughter] What's happened is that the industry has moved forward to meet me. It's finally caught up.

Now I feel very comfortable and I don't feel I'm out of my element and doing "radical" stuff anymore. It's taken 25 years, but I feel like now my time is really here. Now I can jump back into it and kick ass with people that are of such sufficient quality that I no longer feel like I'm taking advantage of them.

Basically, comic books have moved into the 20th century and I'm very happy to be here.

Wizard: You're one of the very few people in this business who has ever managed to move from the creative side to the publishing side. Was there anything that surprised you or that was different once you moved into the side of the desk?

Adams: I didn't expect to get criticized quite so much [Laughter] It's very tough to move from being the favorite child to being one of the ogres of the industry. I share that position with lots of other people now, but I consider myself a pretty nice guy. And I consider myself tough—tough on other people.

I have things thrown in my face like, "well, you believe this, that and the other thing, so why don't you give the artist 90 percent of the money that comes in and you keep 10 percent?" And I have to constantly back up and say, "Wait a second, I didn't say that. I said it's unfair for one side to have a gun and the other side not to have a gun, so you have to try to make things equal, so the two sides can bargain fairly, "What was wrong with the industry was that the creator had no position to bargain from. With my company and some others—not too many—they do have a position. I *fought* to make that happen, but I didn't fight so that the publisher could become the downtrodden creature and the creator the superior; I fought to make things even.

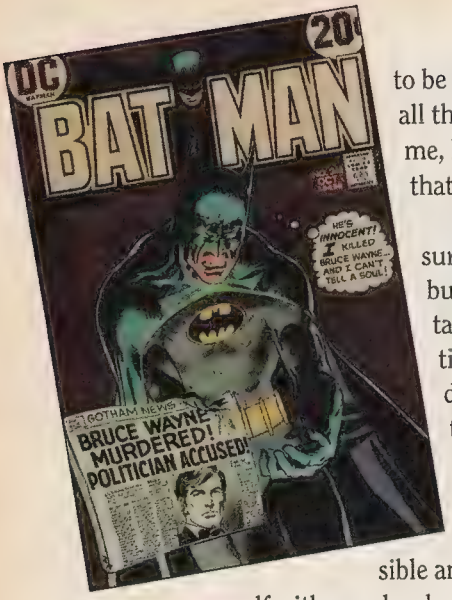
Creatively, people say to me, "All your artists draw like you." And I kind of back up and say, "Wait a second, Mark Beachum draws like me? I don't know, he draws the way he's always drawn."

And the next line is, "Well, you're gathering guys around you then and making them draw like you." And I constantly respond, "Gee, I don't think Michael Golden draws like me, and I don't think Treavor von Eeden draws like me. What's going on?"

What I find is that we go after people who draw well; coincidentally, when you gather a lot of people who draw well—rather than people who may *not* draw all that well—it tends to look like a certain type of comic book: a well-drawn comic book. So all the people we have basically draw well, and for some reason, people think they all draw like me.

There are people out there who draw like me, who have imitated my style, and who have incidentally worked for Continuity. Clarke Hawbaker is an example, so is Tom Grindberg—practically a Neal Adams clone. But he walked in the door at the right time and he had the right stuff, so we hired him. Mike Nasser, who is currently doing some work for DC and is doing *Meagalith* for us, started off drawing like me. It would be silly for us to turn these people away. If Grindberg walked in the door and said, "Gee, I'd like work," we're not going to say, "you draw too much like Neal, we can't use you." [Laughter]

You know, if you've been in the batter's box and you're batting very highly, you really set yourself up



to be criticized. So all this surprised me, but really not that much.

The other surprise is that business does take a lot of time, and it drains the time away. You like to be creative as much as possible and surround your- self with people who can help make decisions and move things forward and *not* get your time drained, because it does stop you from doing a lot of stuff.

A lot of people think that I'm doing business all the time, that I'm not doing that much creative work. Nobody stops for a minute and counts pages and covers and discovers that I'm probably doing more creative work for Continuity than I've ever done for anybody else. It's a matter of perception: If they don't see me drawing a title every month, then they think, "No, Neal's not working; Neal's a busy executive. And that's not true."

WIZARD: As a comics professional, as a person interested in keeping the industry healthy, as a publisher, are you at all concerned by the domination of the business by a single company, as it has been for the last several years?

Adams: Am I personally concerned about it? I'd have to answer in a couple of ways:

First, there tends to be an evening out. There is a tendency for people to avoid allowing a monopoly to take place, so I see a solution in the air. I think people are going to have to work hard to create the solution.

But to define the problem more carefully, it is very, very bad for there to be one superpower in anything. One of the things that happens is that the person or country or company, having attained that position, finds itself—no matter that they may have started out with all the best ideals and positive notions—becoming corrupted from the inside; that the things they start to do are wrong, and they start to hurt people, to take advantage of the power they have.

There is a natural evolution for that kind of thing to be torn down. Part of that is happening now, I think the "desertion" of some of these artists to these alternative situations is an example of people feeling that they've gone as far as they can—they're with the biggest company and they're not happy. I don't know if they have a right to feel that way, but there's definitely a difficulty with one company being the most powerful company.

If you're asking if I would actively take part in trying to even this out, I would simply support those who seek to bring an evenness to the situation—without actively doing anything against Marvel. I think Marvel has a right to exist. I think it is in many ways as much the responsibility of the fans as it is Marvel's responsibility that they have attained this position.

You can't just blame Marvel that they've done well. I think they may become a victim of their own size.

Wizard: If you could change any one thing in the industry today, something that would mean a real difference in the way the business works, what would it be?

Adams: I think I'm trying to do it [Laughter] I mean, when things were very bad in this industry, I made an effort to do something about it. When I realized that neither DC nor Marvel would be willing to give up their power over the individual creators. I started my own studio. Then I financed projected like Howie Chaykin's *Cody Starbuck*, like *Bucky O'Hare,* like *Freakshow* by Berni Wrightson. I took those projects overseas and I attempted—and succeeded in some cases—to sell those projects to European publishers, who are not in the habit of buying all rights.

Then I came back to the U.S. with those projects and I presented them to Dc or Marvel or whoever, and they would indicate they wanted all rights to the projects. I would answer, "Gee, I'm sorry, I've already sold certain rights overseas; I can only sell you some rights, not all rights.

People started to see that there were alternatives, there were different ways to go, that creators weren't stuck working for DC and Marvel. They found out it was possible to retain certain rights to their work. This began a whole revolution in the industry. It's a quiet little thing I managed to accomplish without really breaking any teeth.

So, is there anything I would change? No—I think I've changed quite enough. I think I've kicked the blocks out from under the wheels of the truck and it's running down hill—let's see what happens to it. ■

IMAGE COMICS:
THE FACE OF THE FUTURE!

CREATED BY
JIM LEE
WITH
BRANDON CHOI
CO-WRITER
&
SCOTT WILLIAMS
INKER

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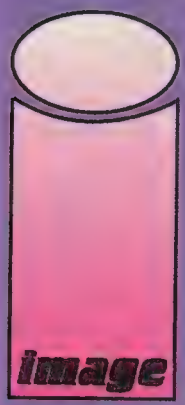

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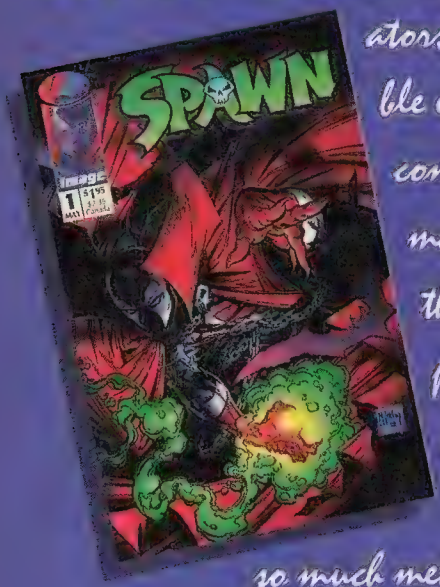
WILDC.A.T.S™
COVERT-ACTION-TEAMS

iImage

THEY'RE THE BIGGEST NEWS IN COMICS TODAY. A group of hot, young creators who left the Marvel stable en masse to create Image, a creator-owned comics imprint, published by Malibu. Though many viewed the move from safe, secure Marvel to the untested waters of Image foolhardy, it could prove to be the biggest success in the uostart's careers. Never before has an alternative publisher experienced such phenomenal sales and so much media coverage in and outside the comics world.



By Patrick McCallum

Aside from attempting to prove that a comic company can survive, even thrive, outside the Big Two, Image has another strong message to send. Since the inception of comics, the creators of the characters you love so much have generally taken the back seat. Way back. Instead of prospering from the products of their imagination, the artists and writers sometimes struggle to make ends meet while the publishers, usually big corporations, reap the benefits of the work. Image has reversed that. The primary stars of their comics are the superheroes, but their creators do not fall by the wayside. Each creator retains the exclusive rights to his or her creation, maintains complete creative control, and holds all financial control of the characters. If any of the characters are optioned out for movies, TV, cards, T-shirts, toys, whatever, the licensees have to deal with the creator, ensuring not only that the licensed product meets with his or her expectations, but that they again reap the financial benefits of such a deal.

Todd McFarlane and Jim Lee, two of the big guns at Image.

SO WHO EXACTLY OWNS IMAGE? The question was posed to Rob Liefeld in an interview in *Wizard* #10, and his answer was this,"We all own houses in the same neighborhood, but no one owns the neighborhood." Essentially, it's a shared banner with everyone in charge of their own projects and no one person running the whole show. Whether or not that's such a good thing remains to be seen.

Malibu, another large alternative publisher, already had strong ties to the Image creators, and when Image needed a publisher and a distributor, Malibu fit the bill. So even though Image is an imprint of Malibu, Malibu has no editorial or creative control over the books.

TODD MCFARLANE got his start in the comic's field on Epic Comics *Coyote*, and moved on to work at DC on *Infinity Inc.*, then back to Marvel where he really began to pick up fan attention in the pages of *Incredible Hulk* along with scripter Peter David. When he picked up the job as regular artist on *Amazing Spider-Man*, he took the first step to his current superstar Status. After a successful two years plus stint on *Amazing*, including the introduction of Venom and the "Assassination Plot" storyline, McFarlane was ready for the next step in his career. He quit the *Amazing Spider-Man* and asked Marvel for a project he could write as well as draw. Todd expected a new book, something small that a new writer could break in on, but what he got was an all-new Spider-Man title, and the debut of *Spider-Man* #1 (which sold in excess of 2.6 million) made him one of the hottest properties in comics. A little over a year later McFarlane decided to take some time off from comics to devote himself to his wife and newborn daughter. For almost a year, comic fans had to go without their monthly dose of McFarlane juice. Eight months later, Todd McFarlane returned, but instead of claiming his seat at the helm of a Spider title or some other "name" book, Todd became one of the founding members of Image, and unleashed his newest creation, *Spawn*, into the comic book world. *Spawn*'s storyline revolves around Al Simmons (a.k.a Spawn) who returns to life after striking a deal with the devil, so that when he dies a *second* time, the horned dude gets Simmon's soul, which was originally supposed to go elsewhere. Albert returns to Earth in search of his wife, but finds himself the butt of a cruel joke. The devil has erased Spawn's memories, but not his feelings. So he knows he loves this woman, his friends, his life, but now finds himself unable to go back to them, making his reason to return to this life moot. On top of that, Spawn finds that he possesses fantastic new powers which enable him to do wondrous feats for good, but the more he uses this power, the more it drains his life force and the closer he comes to returning to the devil. When *Spawn* debuted in May, it was the best-selling book that month (outselling the *X-Men*, *Batman* and, yes, even *Spider-Man*), and has since gone on to be not only the first monthly book from Image, but one of the most successful as well.

JIM LEE started on the long road to success penciling *Alpha Flight*, which really helped refine his

SPAWN ™ & © 1992 TODD MCFARLANE. DRAGON ™ & © 1992 ERIK LARSEN.

© Jim Lee

Image Comics has set sales records for alternate publishers.

artwork, but did little to make comicdom "oooh" and "ahh." Lee later moved to the pages of the *Punisher War Journal,* where the high profile of the title set the wheels of stardom in motion, as fans everywhere began to talk about that "Lee guy." His biggest break came when he guest-penciled an issue of the *Uncanny X-Men,* #248. The reaction his stylish pencils drew from the fans of the merry mutants was tremendous, and Lee returned to do a three-issue storyline through issues #256-258, which led to his becoming the regular artist on the book as of issue #268. But the biggest news was yet to come. Due to the success of the *Uncanny X-Men*, Marvel decided it was time that the team expanded and an all-new mutant book, titled simply *X-Men,* hit the stands in August of 1991. Lee left the *Uncanny* title to come aboard this new book, helping it to become the best-selling comic in history, selling 8.2 million copies, thanks not only to Jim's art, but to a multiple cover gimmick and an incredible sales promotion push. After 11 months of being plotter and penciler on the book, Jim broke away from Marvel and joined Image, where he plots and pencils *WildC.A.T.s: Covert Action Teams*. The story consists of a team of superhuman characters, some alien, some human, some synthetic, who have banded together to drive off an alien invasion—one in which the aliens are working behind the scenes and placing themselves (thanks to some nifty shape shifting abilities) deep into high-ranking governmental positions. This creates some pretty heavy negative press for the 'C.A.T.S., as the general public and the other Image heroes see them apparently killing key public figures, which puts the 'C.A.T.S at odds with the heroes they should call friends! When the series debuted in July 1992, it became one of the best-selling alternative comics of all time.

ROB LIEFELD'S first big-time comic came in the form of the five-issue *Hawk and Dove* miniseries from DC Comics. Though Rob showed a great style and really fantastic page designs, he didn't quite set the world aflame with his art. His big break came in the form of the *New Mutants,* where he picked up the penciling chores and helped turn a floundering title into a book so popular and powerful that the stories he drew and later plotted are still being felt today. However, his style remains controversial in its flaunting of traditional pacing, proportion, and perspective. He shook the New Mutants team apart and pieced it back together, revamping old members and introducing all-new characters, such as Shatterstar, Feral, and Cable, all of which led to the cancellation of the title and its reformation into *X-Force*, a book that sold over 3.5 million copies. (Each issue came polybagged with one of five different Impel [Skybox International] trading cards).

With the success he experienced at Marvel, Rob decided to expand his influence into the alternative market and pioneered Image Comics. His comic debut for the new imprint was the five-issue *Youngblood* series, which features the exploits of a government- sponsored team of superheroes that fill the roles of the F.B.I. and the C.I.A. Not only are they top government operatives, they're also the media's biggest stars. In our world, where movie and sport stars are the biggest darlings of the media, picture the kind of press Superman would get. Rob has appeared in a Levi's "Button Your Fly" commercial, the Dennis Miller TV Show, and has been profiled by *People.*

Aside from the three heavy hitters we just reviewed from the Image stable, there is a small (yet growing) group of creators also working at their best to put Image at the top. There's *Punisher* and *Uncanny X-Man* artist **Whilce Portacio** who brings *Wetworks* to Image. The story involves a small military unit working for the government that gets a new assignment to protect mankind from the supernatural horrors that stem from the darkest reaches of the human mind. Just for trivia's sake, "Wetworks" is a C.I.A. slang term for an assassination.

Fresh from his stint on *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man* is **Erik Larson**, who brings us *The Savage Dragon*. Found stricken with amnesia, naked and unconscious, the Dragon was trained to become a one-man SWAT team and take back the city of Chicago from villianous scum. It's a good thing Erik's character is endowed with super strength and a bulletproof hyde.

Best known for his work on *Uncanny X-Men* and *Wolverine*, **Marc Silvestri** brings his fantastic talent to Image with *Cyberforce*, a tale of bionically enhanced mutants who rebel against Cyberdata, the huge corporation responsible for creating the Cyberforce team and other less moralistic individuals. Bent on world domination, only Cyberforce stands between them and the fruition of their plans.

JIM VALENTINO left *Guardians of the Galaxy* to create *Shadowhawk*, the ultimate mystery hero. Not only is his identity a secret to the rest of the Image Universe, it's a secret to the readers as well. Is Shadowhawk Black or White? Hispanic? Is he a he? Why all the secrecy? The modus operandi of the Hawk has a lot to do with it. Not content with merely handing criminals over to the police, the 'Hawk takes it just a few steps further. He sentences them to life imprisonment within their own bodies by breaking their spines, paralyzing them.

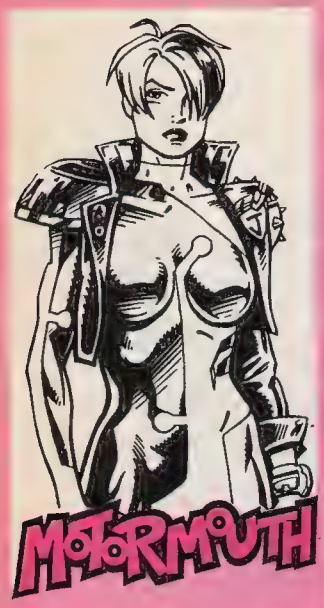
DALE KEOWN rose to star status virtually out of the blue. He broke into mainstream comics as the regular artist on the *Incredible Hulk* after a stint on *Dragonforce* for Ariel Comics. He began on Marvel's Jade Giant in Issue #367 of the series and the fans instantly took a liking to his clean, tight artwork. Leaving the series right before the 400th issue anniversary, Dale made the move to Image and is now working on *PITT*. The story involves a mammoth alien assassin, stranded on Earth and befriended by a young earth boy named Timmy, who attemps to help Pitt fit in with life on earth.

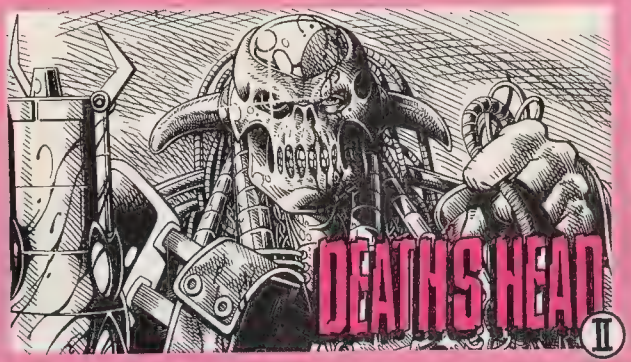
Rob Liefeld has already begun to branch out his ideas in the Image Universe by adding two more titles to his *Youngblood* series. The first, *Brigade* is plotted out by Rob, co-scripted by Rob Liefeld and Hank Kanalz and drawn by Marat Mychaels. It involves Battlestone, the ex-leader of Youngblood, who now heads a new team that is heavily frowned upon by the U.S. government. A quick roll call of the team: Kayo, Coldsnap, Thermal, Seahawk, Atlas and Stasis. The second project Rob has cooking after *Youngblood* is *Supreme*, the most powerful being in the Image Universe, who started his career in the early 1900s and, by the end of the '40s, decided that he had done all that needed to be done here on Earth, and headed off to find his destiny in space. Now, almost 50 years later, he returns to an Earth he can hardly recognize. No longer is he the only high-profile hero around, and people don't treat him like a god anymore. There's a whole new crop of heroes on the scene like Youngblood, Spawn, and The Savage Dragon, all of whom, he feels, take away from his fame and deity-like status. That, coupled with his overwhelming ego and fantastic powers, make Supreme a very dangerous "spoiled brat." Finding a little respect in G.A.T.E Industries, Supreme will take on the mantle of leader to a team known as Heavymettle, which consists of Riot, Skyraker, Decibel, and Menagerie, and will tackle assignments inside and outside the law.

Rob Liefelds *Supreme* is one of Image's new superheroes, but with a different twist.

So what does the future hold for Image? If it's anything like their past and present, not only will they become one of the industry's more powerful publishers, they'll also show that the real people who create the comics are just as important as the characters themselves, and deserve better than being thrown to the wayside while their ideas feed the bigwigs who care about profit margins and little else. Whether you like them or not, Image is a long overdue idea that is finally bringing about change in a business that is frequently unfair to its most important resource: those with imagination. ■

THANK YOU, AMERICA!





TOP 100 APRIL 1992

Here's the list for April... the countdown of the top selling titles sold as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.

1 X-Men #9
2 Infinity War #1
3 Uncanny X-Men #289
4 X-Force #11
5 Silver Sable #1
6 Spider-Man #23
7 Amazing Spider-Man #363
8 Ghost Rider #26
9 Spectacular Spider-Man #189
10 Youngblood #3
11 Wolverine #55
12 X-Factor #79
13 Lobo's Back #2
14 Punisher War Zone #4
15 Warlock & Infinity Watch #5
16 Cage #3
17 Guardians of the Galaxy #25
18 Punisher #64
19 Incredible Hulk #394
20 Green Lantern: Mosaic #1
21 Silver Surfer #66
22 Punisher Annual #5
23 Legends of the Dark Knight #32
24 New Warriors #24
25 Nomad #2
26 Legends of the Dark Knight #31
27 Deathlok #12
28 Warheads #1
29 Silver Surfer Annual #5
30 Next Men #3
31 Batman #480
32 Death's Head II #4
33 Marvel Comics Presents #105
34 Star Wars: Dark Empire #3
35 Darkhawk #16
36 Aliens: Hive #3
37 Marvel Comics Presents #104
38 Blood & Glory
39 Web of Spider-Man #89
40 Excalibur #51
41 Batman: Gotham Knights #4
42 Batman: Run Riddler Run #1
43 Punisher War Journal #43
44 Batman #479
45 Green Lantern #25
46 Thor #448
47 Doctor Strange #42
48 Captain America #401
49 Detective Comics #645
50 Terminator: Hunters & Killers #2
51 Daredevil #305
52 Green Lantern Corps Quarterly #1
53 Fantastic Four #365
54 Avengers #348
55 Iron Man #281
56 Moon Knight #39
57 Black Condor #1
58 Namor #27
59 Namor Annual #2
60 Armageddon: Inferno #3
61 Uncanny X-Men #248 2nd Print
62 Alpha Flight Special
63 What If? #38
64 Archer & Armstrong #0
65 Wonder Man #10
66 Avengers West Coast #83
67 Justice League America #63
68 Deathstroke the Terminator #11
69 Sandman #38
70 New Titans #87
71 Superman #68
72 Quasar #35
73 Justice League Europe #39
74 Doctor Strange Annual #2
75 Sleepwalker #13
76 Motormouth #1
77 Alpha Flight #109
78 Action Comics #678
79 Superman: Man of Steel #12
80 Dark Horse Presents: Aliens #1
81 Adventures of Superman #491
82 Amazing Spider-Man #265 2nd print
83 Aquaman #7
84 Nam #59
85 Star Trek: The Next Generation #32
86 Warlock #2
87 Cops: The Job #1
88 Star Trek #32
89 Flash #64
90 Flash #65
91 Demon #24
92 She-Hulk #40
93 L.E.G.I.O.N.'92 #40
94 Justice League Quarterly #7
95 Legion of Super-Heroes #30
96 X-Men Classic #72
97 Green Arrow #63
98 Wonder Woman #63
99 Tarzan the Warrior #2
100 Ray #5

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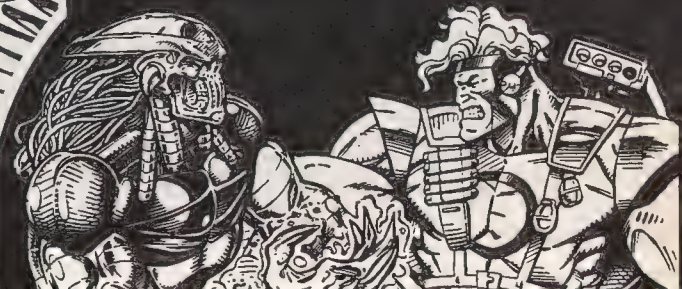

Amazing ART

The Showcase Of Future Comic Book Illustrators of America!

WOLVERINE ™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

Andrew L. Jones
Brunswick, ME Age: 20

WOW. You're never going to believe this. Valiant Comics loved this section so much, they're choosing the one best Amazing Art that shows Valiant characters each month, and giving that winner a free Gold Edition *Eternal Warrior* #1 (that's version 1B in the price guide, kids--now going for over $100!). So who knows? Not only can your art be seen by all the companies here, but you could win prizes too! Send yours today!!

All you need to do to enter Wizard's Amazing Art Contest is send your artwork with your name, address, telephone number and age to:

Amazing Artists
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Submissions can be on any form of un-lined paper or posterboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, etc). Neon or metallic inks will not print. Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11 1/4". Do not fold, bend or roll artwork--mail them flat to avoid damage. All submissions are non-returnable and become property of Wizard Press. Employees of Valiant Comics are the sole judges of the Gold Eternal Warrior contest, and all decisions are final. Good Luck!

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Tim Dalessandro
Philadelphia, PA

ROGUE™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

Travis Cook
Saginaw, TX Age: 19

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Christopher Walton
Tullahoma, TN Age: 25

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Dexter Stacey Tan Sandiko
Tondo Manila, Philippines Age: 15

BATMAN™ & © 1992 DC COMICS.

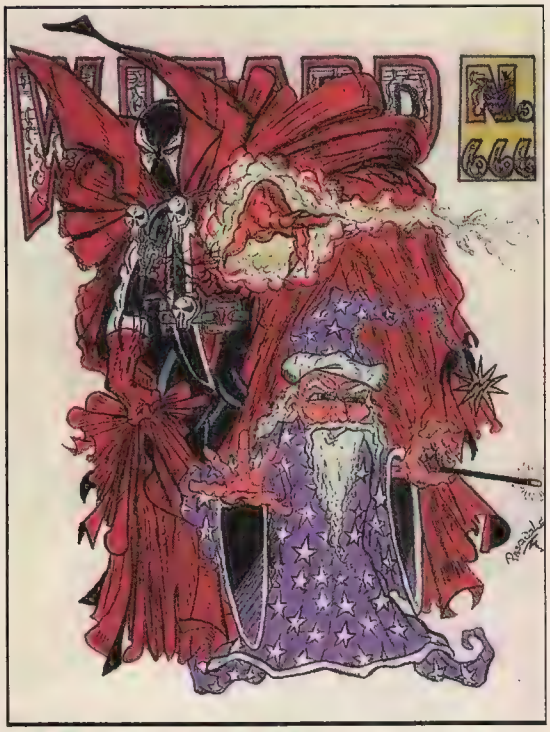
Rene Lopez
Santa Ana, CA

Psylocke, Rogue & Jubilee™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

Walter Schoenleber
Burlingame, CA Age: 21

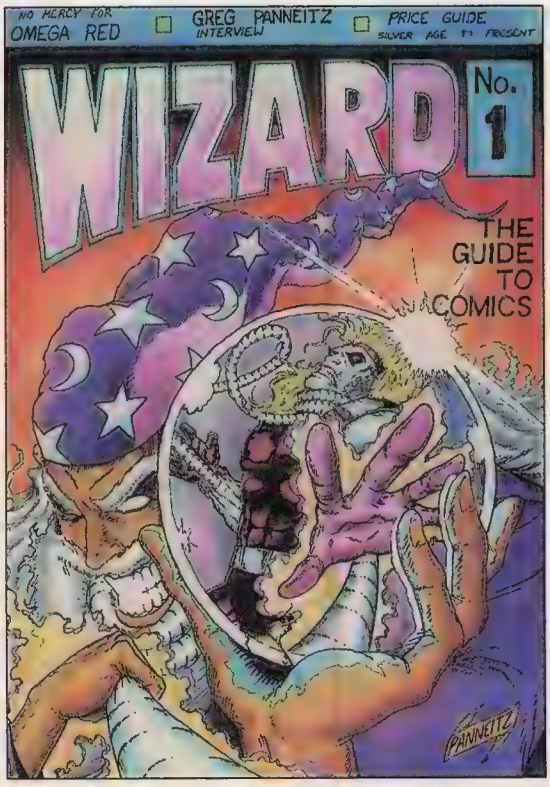
The X-Men™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

Virgilio Cadiente
Honolulu, HI Age: 21



Spawn™ & © 1992 Todd McFarlane

Michael Pasquale
Woodside, NY Age: 14



Omega Red™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

Greg Panneitz
Webster, NY Age: 18

PUNISHER ™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

Ramon Torrez
Oxnard, CA Age: 21

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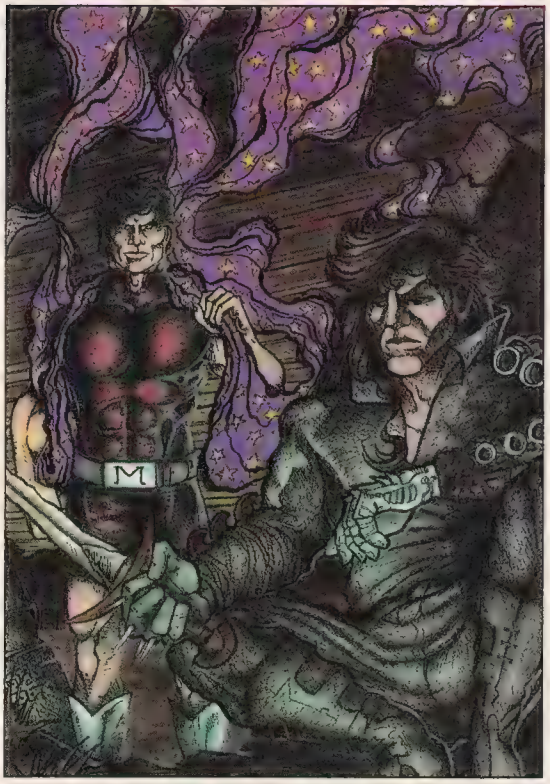
Matthew T. Martin
Elkhart, IN Age: 17



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Alan D. Hagen
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Kirk Buckendorf
Bullhead City, AZ Age: 18

Every month in Wizard we throw the hardest questions your way, and only a select few have what it takes to score a perfect 30 points. Think you can? Give it a shot. This month we're grading you alongside high cholestoral intake foods, so the higher you score, the higher you rank. Answers on p 172.

How well do you fare?

score	rank
0-4	Butter Filled Magic Middles
5-10	New Chicken McGristle
11-25	Grease Milkshake
26-29	Deep Fried Pork Fat
30	Lard IV

1) Which hero is slowly being killed by his own power?
A) Morbius
B) Jack of Hearts
C) Spawn
D) Both B and C

2) What planet is the Impossible Man from?
A) Poppulation
B) Poppup
C) Impy
D) Alpo IV

3) Terra is a member of what super team?
A) Team Titans
B) Outsiders
C) Terror, Inc.
D) Nightstalkers

4) What is the name of the sarge in *Aliens*?
A) Drake
B) Apone
C) Frost
D) Gorman

5) Who wrote *The Vampire Lestat*?
A) Mary Shelley
B) Bram Stroker
C) Anne Rice
D) Stephen King

6) Erica Pierce was the villian in what crossover series?
A) Inferno
B) Legends
C) Crisis on Infinte Earths
D) Unity

7) Which character is not a member of Cyberforce?
A) Killjoy
B) Velocity
C) Ripclaw
D) Stryker

8) First Captain of the Starship Enterprise was?
A) James T. Kirk
B) Christopher Pike
C) Jean-Luc Picard
D) Robert April

9) Callisto, the ex-leader of the Morlocks, has a patch over her?
A) Torn jeans
B) Left eye
C) Right eye
D) Both eyes (which explains why she keeps walking into things)

10) The Supreme Intelligence was the ruler of what alien race?
A) Skrull
B) Kree
C) Xandarians
D) Those little fuzzy guys from critters

11) Spider-Man has what kind of design on his back?
A) A black spider
B) Red spider
C) A web "streak" down the back
D) It's all blue

12) The She-Hulk first appeared in?
A) *She-Hulk* #1

B) *Hulk* #238
C) *Fantastic Four* #219
D) *Marvel Team-Up* #52

13) What was the name of the blonde waitress who used to ball out Mel on "Alice"?
A) Vera
B) Blanche
C) Gareb
D) Flo

14) Which of the following Valiant characters wears a skirt?
A) A-1
B) RAI
C) Magnus
D) Archer

15) The villian with photographic reflexes is?
A) Taskmaster
B) Parasite
C) Fitzroy
D) Black King

16) Which of the following characters has the best chance of becoming a road kill?
A) Ka-Zar
B) The Mongoose
C) Porcupine Man
D) Rocket Racoon

17) Thor is the God of?
A) Strength
B) Thunder
C) Wisdom
D) Fire

18) What was the worst scene in *Batman Returns*?
A) The Penguin being raised by sewer penguins
B) The cats bringing Selina Kyle back to life
C) Batman kicking the bottom out of the Batmobile
D) Gosh, now that I think of it, were there any good scenes?

19) How did Guy Gardner lose his Green Lantern power ring?
A) Hal Jordan won it in battle
B) He quit the G.L. Corps
C) He was dismissed from the Corps
D) It was stolen by Lobo

20) Namor experiences shifts in his behavior because of?
A) Imbalances in his blood
B) W.W. II flashbacks
C) He feels abandoned by all of his people
D) He watched too much TV as a kid

21) What were the names of Luke's guardians in Star Wars?
A) Uncle Arimis and Aunt Irana
B) Uncle Aaron and Aunt Ilana
C) Uncle Owen and Aunt Veru
D) Uncle Arayn and Aunt Vernu

22) Sean Young made a stink about not getting the role of what comic book character?
A) Mary Jane Parker
B) Lois Lane
C) April O'Neill
D) Catwoman

23) "Pitt" is what Image creator's creation?
A) Whilce Portacio
B) Dale Keown
C) Brian Murray
D) Dave Kiernon

24) Ren and Stimpy are famous for?
A) Magic nostril curls
B) Mystery trouser vapor
C) Magic nose goblins
D) All of the above

25) Who was on the cover of Wizard: The Guide to Comics 3?
A) Wolverine
B) Ghostrider
C) Batman
D) Silver Surfer

26) The symbol on Batman's chest is colored bright in contrast to the rest of his costume because:
A) It's meant to strike fear into criminals
B) It's bulletproof and it's meant to draw their fire
C) It's a light
D) That's the only color bat symbols come in

27) What year does *Magnus Robot Fighter* take place?
A) 3998
B) 4001
C) 4000
D) 2999

28) Who was responsible for blowing up Alec Holland's lab?
A) William Batson
B) Anthony Arcade
C) Anton Arcane
D) Alec Baldwin

29) David Letterman once appeared in what comic?
A) *Web of Spider-Man*
B) *Avengers*
C) *Hulk*
D) Both A & B

30) Which of the following abilities does nightcrawler not have?
A) The ability to grip almost any surface and seem to walk up walls
B) The ability to blend into shadows
C) The ability to use his tail almost as a third arm
D) The ability to "phase" through any clear object

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Hawkman CS12

Iron Man CS13

Punisher CS14

She-Hulk CS15

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Spider-Man 1 CS17

Spider-Man 2 CS18

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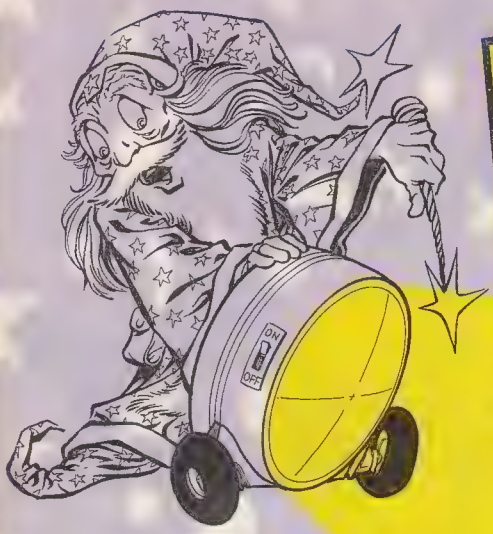
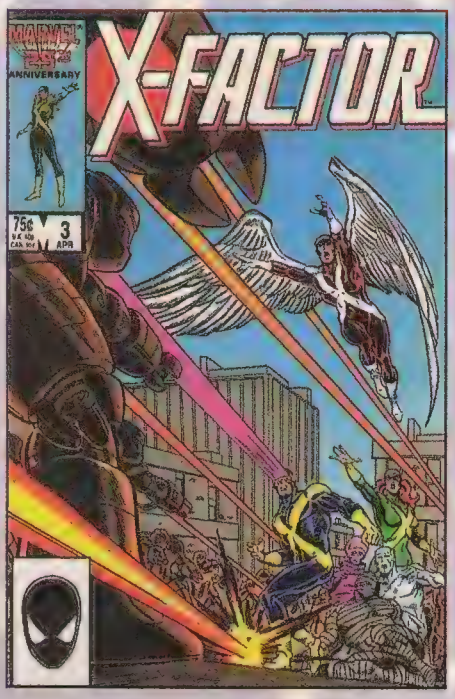


WIZARD

Amazing Adventures #11

Artist: Tom Sutton
Writer: Gerry Conway
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: March 1972



And check out X-Factor *#3, where the Beast gets de-furred.*

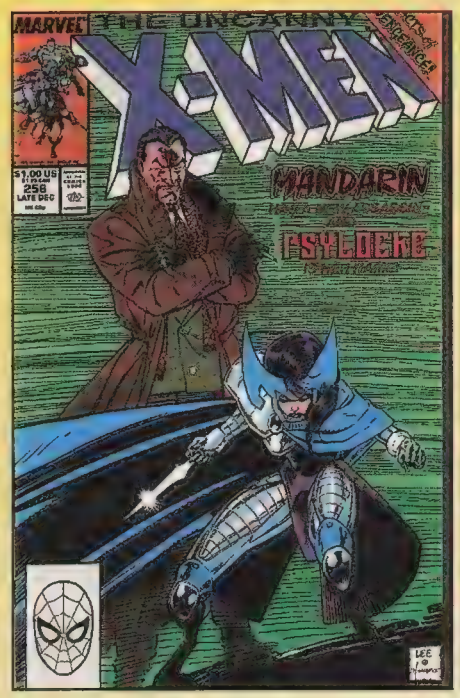
For those of you old and senile enough to remember the days when the Beast was still hairless (well, sort of hairless. He had hair on his head and, well, other places too, but that's not really any of our business), he looked like such a geek. He had these huge feet and hands, and he looked like a total dork. The mighty staff at Marvel must have realized this, so they gave the beastie boy a whole new image, dropping his utter geekitude and transforming him into the blue-furred bad boy that has really hit it big with The Avengers, X-Factor, and X-Men fans. The beast was a member of all three teams (as well as The Defenders), making the Fantastic Four the only major Marvel team Hank McCoy never joined. Now, with constant exposure in the pages of *X-Men* alongside team members Wolverine, Gambit, Rogue, Cyclops, and Psylocke, this almost-Silver Age book (c'mon, it's a book from '72, it's so close to being a Silver Age book it isn't funny) has a definite chance to become a big-money issue. And as for trying to find a copy in really good shape, forget about it. With the black border surrounding the whole cover, it's almost impossible to find a copy that isn't creased, flaked, or otherwise "not mint." So if you can, if you're lucky, and if you care, see if you can find a copy of *Amazing Adventures* #11.

COMIC WATCH

New Mutants Annual #2

Artist: Alan Davis
Writer: Chris Claremont
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: Oct. 1989

Will the Wizard Comic Watch ever run out of mutant comics to spotlight? Nah, we're just getting started. In fact, here's another one now. Back a handful of years ago, before she wore the skin-tight outfit (not that we're complaining), Psylocke was your average, wholesome young lady with purple hair and bionic eyes when she made her American comics debut in the pages of *The New Mutants*. She appeared in English comics before that, in *Captain Britain,* but fans tend to view those as sort of outside the Marvel universe and lean towards the annual as her "first" appearance. The new and improved Psylocke (courtesy of The Mandarin in *Uncanny X-Men* #256) has made a tremendous hit with comic fans and shows no signs of becoming that second-rate "in the background" type of character she was before the Lee/Claremont makeover. Giving the She-Hulk and Mary Jane Parker competition for the coveted "Hottest Babe in all of Comicdom," and her constant exposure (but not total exposure, not that that wouldn't be nice) in the pages of *X-Men* make her little-known and monstrously underrated American debut a serious collectors' item that doesn't get weighted down by a monster price tag.



Also check out the aforementioned Uncanny X-Men *#256, where Psylocke gets her makeover.*

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The wonderful thing about the Wizard's crystal ball is the variety of information that can be viewed through its crystalline surface. One can gaze upon ages and events long past, specific images occurring in the present, and pieces of that great undiscovered country most men call the future. Until now, I have utilized this fantastic tool only to foretell the desirability of certain select comic book issues. As I progress further in my studies, I have begun to realize that although this is a beneficial use of the crystal ball, it limits the scope of information I am able to gather. It allows me to read only a few chapters in an immense, ever unfolding tale. So, this time as I looked into the Wizard's mighty sphere, I endeavored to gaze across the entire time stream at the hottest sensation to arrive in the comic book world: Valiant Comics. I have been able to discover the currently unfolding present of this publisher, and have also glimpsed parts of their as yet undiscovered future.

The big news in the present for Valiant is the departure of President Jim Shooter. Initially, the news sent a wave of panic through the market as holders of valuable back issues worried that this event might pull prices down. But this fear was based on the mistaken belief that Shooter was "The Man" at Valiant. He did control significant aspects of the business (mostly creative), but the top brass at Valiant is spread among a few intelligent and talented individuals. Policy making and general business attitude should remain the same. Barry Windsor-Smith (an eminently qualified selection) has been chosen to replace Shooter. As the full story has filtered out and down, the initial fears have subsided. Valiant's greatest loss will be Shooter's exceptional storytelling ability.

So what does the future hold for Valiant? A few new titles are on the horizon: *H.A.R.D. Corps*, *Bloodshot* (originally titled *Rising Spirit*), and *Turok*. For a more detailed analysis of *H.A.R.D. Corps*, please refer to the Wizard's Crystal Ball in issue #13. *Bloodshot* will appear first in *Rai* #0, due out in August. Other early appearances include *Eternal Warrior* #4 and #5. *Turok: Dinosaur Fighter* is scheduled for the Spring of 1993. This is another revamp of an old Gold Key character. Early Turok appearances have heated up recently; *Magnus* #12 and *Archer and Armstrong* #2; get them while they're still available at a reasonable price. October will usher in the temporary union of Valiant with Dark Horse Comics in a two-part crossover: *Predator vs. Magnus*. The first issue will feature a Gold/Platinum cover for every 50 copies on initial orders. These projects should all be received favorably by fans, assuming that the exceptional Valiant quality is present in these issues.

In terms of policy and business strategy, Valiant's plans should not change much. Print runs are down from *Unity* levels, but they will continue to increase as Valiant gathers more and more readers over time. Their overprinting policy is key, and it will not change. Unlike some other publishers, Valiant only overprints slightly, or not at all. What does this mean for the comic collector? After a publisher has received their initial orders on a book, they decide on a print run. If they print exactly the number of books ordered, there will be none available for reorder or longer term back issue demand. The value of the book can then rise with demand. If the publisher overprints, then there will be copies available after all the initial orders have been filled; this usually depresses the potential price escalation of that book. It all comes down to supply vs. demand. Valiant's policy of limited overprinting is one major reason why the value of their back issues has consistently increased.

The undisclosed future looks like it has a few changes in store for Valiant's creative direction. With the departure of Jim Shooter, there will be a writing void that will have to be filled by Barry Windsor-Smith, Bob Layton, Don Perlin, and various yet-to-be-discovered newcomers. Shooter's storytelling will surely be missed, but Windsor-Smith has been doing an excellent job on *Archer & Armstrong*, so he should be able to pick up some slack. The creative teamwork at Valiant has been laying the long term groundwork for their universe from the beginning. It is now apparent that all of the pre-*Unity* stories were moving purposefully toward this great event. Valiant's strong point has been their consistently captivating storylines. They must maintain this in order to enjoy continued success.

The past, present, and future of Valiant Comics all shine brightly as I gaze into the crystal ball. Their creative and business policies have moved them steadily forward from their modest beginnings a few years ago. Valiant stands poised to become one of the significant explorers of the great undiscovered country of the future. ■

PICKS FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT

Here's a listing of the hottest books shipping in September!

H.A.R.D. Corps #1

Artist: David Lapham
Writer: David Michelinie
Release Date: Sept.
Cover Price: $2.50

Maniac, Gunslinger, Flatliner, Shakespeare, Superstar, Hammerhead. With names like these, doesn't it sound like we could be in for whole bunches of fun with the *H.A.R.D. Corps* #1? Our tremendously creative pals at Valiant check in with this latest, all-new , all-action-packed ongoing series. The H.A.R.D. Corps will debut in September with a bang in the form of a gatefold cover pencilled by Image Comics sensation and (all-around good guy) Jim Lee, and inked by long-time fan favorite and Valiant guru Bob Layton. The H.A.R.D. Corps is a strike force that possesses exactly the butt-stomping ability that its name suggests. It's obvious that right from the get-go these guys are set to do some serious tail-kicking of Toyo Harada and his Harbinger foundation. The H.A.R.D. Corps was put together as a paramilitary force by one of Harada's most bitter enemies. This unknown man has made the Corps a little bit different than your regular mercenaries — they're all back from the dead and outfitted with cybernetics and weapons which allow them to battle Harbingers and other bad guys to the best of their abilities. Of course, given the fact that they're engaged in industrial warfare with Harada, Sting, and the rest of the Harbingers team, they will often find themselves in the middle of the mayhem. Don't miss this one, as Valiant turns the action up a few notches!

H.A.R.D. Corps ™ & © 1992 Voyager Communications.

Spider-Man 2099 #1

Artist: Rick Leonardi
Writer: Peter David
Release Date: Sept. 1st
Cover Price: $1.75

Hey! Wait a minute, Spidey's flying? What's going on here? No gang, you didn't miss an important issue of any of your favorite Spider-Man titles, your imagination is just being transferred to the year 2099, courtesy of your pals at Marvel! *Spider-Man 2099* is the first of four 2099 titles coming your way, with Spidey debuting in September with a special foil-stamped cover. *Spider-Man 2099* is the saga of Miguel O'Hara, a top-notch scientist in the field of genetics at Alchemax, one of the foremost companies on the planet in 2099. While engaged in an experiment, something goes wacky and Miguel becomes imprinted with the genetics of a spider! Along with these genetics come not only the strength, speed, and agility of a spider, but also the appearance of a spider! Needless to say, it seems that Mr. O'Hara's life is now going to be radically different! *Spider-Man 2099* #1, is the latest great Spidey treat Marvel is unleashing in celebration of ol' web-head's 30th birthday!

Nightstalkers #1

Artist: Ron Carney
Writer: D.G. Chichhester
Release Date: Sept. 1st
Cover Price: $2.75

Part five of the six-part "Rise of the Midnight Sons" saga is brought to us by Marvel in the form of *Nightstalkers* #1. As with all six parts of "Midnight Sons," *Nightstalkers* #1 will be polybagged with a section of the Midnight Sons' poster. This title features the resurrection (I just had to use that word) of three characters featured in the long-gone *Tomb of Dracula*: Blade, Hannibal King, and Frank Drake. This trio starts its own agency called Borderline, dedicated to the investigation and destruction of anything supernatural. The creation of Borderline drags them right into the middle of the Midnight Sons' fray as they get hired by big-time bad babe Lilith to dispose of our heroes Ghost Rider and Johnny Blaze. As they are in the midst of their job, they begin to see through Lilith and recognize her for the evil wench that she really is. But our gal Lilith, being no dummy, has sent out her own mercenary of destruction, Meat Market (cool name, huh?), behind the Nightstalkers to finish off the job in case there's any trouble..

SPIDER-MAN and NIGHTSTALKERS ™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group

Supreme #1

Artist: Brian Murray
Writer: Rob Liefeld
Release Date: September
Cover Price: $1.95

Supreme. No, he wasn't a backup singer for Diana Ross in the 1960s and '70s. He was the earth's greatest hero from the '20s through the '40s. He left Earth at the end of the '40s to check out goings-on throughout the universe, in his typical heroic way. He comes back to earth in 1992, figuring there would be a huge hero's welcome awaiting him. Thanks to the popularity and fame of Youngblood, people think that Supreme was really not too big of a deal, which irks the crap out of him.He feels that the Youngbloods are just a bunch of punks who should show him the respect he thinks he's due. They don't, so that creates immediate tension between him and Youngblood. *Supreme* #1 is the latest ongoing series from the creator-owned gang at Image Comics, and also the latest creation from Rob (Media Icon) Liefield. Supreme is the strongest man in the Image universe, and he will become the head of a group called Heavy Mettle, a collection of superpowered heroes operating both within and without the confines of the law.

Uncanny X-Men #294

Artist: Brandon Peterson
Writer: Scott Lobdell
Release Date: Sept. 1st
Cover Price: $1.50

Well folks, it all begins here! It's the 12-part, Fall mutant crossover, known as "X-Ecutioner's Song!" After the conclusion of the Cable limited series, mutant bad guy Stryfe (yes, the guy with the helmet that can't possibly fit through your average doorway) is poised and ready to confront and destroy his enemies: the X-Men, Mr. Sinister, and Apocalypse. First comes an attempt to kill Professor X, with all clues leading to everyone's favorite gun-toting mutie — Cable! Then Cyclops and Jean Grey are kidnapped. These two occurrences lead to the X-Men splitting into their blue and gold teams., one to find and free Cyclops and Jean, the other to tackle Cable and his merry band of brats — X-Force. Throughout this series (which courses through the pages of *X-Men*, *X-Factor* and *X-Force*) we will see such entertaining sights as Bishop and Wolvie taking on Cable, and Archangel meeting up with his chief tormentor, Apocalypse. So fasten your seatbelts mutant-lovers, Marvel's giving us a Fall brawl to remember!

SUPREME ™ & © 1992 Rob Liefeld X-MEN ™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group

MORE PICKS

Amazing Spider-Man #368
MARVEL: Invasion of the Spider-Slayers p1- Peter tries to find out the truth about his parents as Alistair Smythe assembles a team of Spider-Slayers. **$1.25**

Archer & Armstrong #5
VALIANT: Armstrong goes to his home, and you'll never believe where that is! (Neither will Archer!) Art by Barry Windsor-Smith. **$2.50**

Batman #486
DC COMICS: Batman tears through Gotham out of control in search of the Black Mask, when he meets the brutal killer Metalhead. **$1.25**

The Batman Adventures #1
DC COMICS: This new series adapts Batman's new animated series on the Fox network, using its hot new style and attitude! **$1.25**

Brigade #3
IMAGE: When Battlestone and Brigade are charged with crimes against an intergalactic Royal Family, they are arrested and must fight for their lives! **$1.95**

Cable #2
MARVEL: Cable and Kane join together to hunt down Stryfe in this prelude to "The X-Ecutioner's Song." **$2.50**

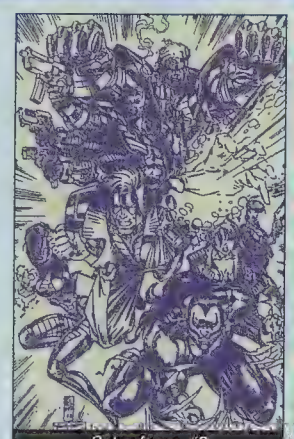
Congorilla #1
DC COMICS: Congo Bill is trapped in the battered body of an "accident" victim as an evil mind inhabits the body of the Golden Gorilla! **$1.75**

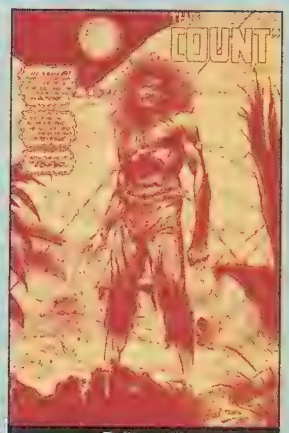
CyberForce #2
IMAGE: CyberForce meets the heavily-armed CyberData storm troops in combat as the new villainess, Killjoy, makes her debut. **$1.95**

Daredevil #310
MARVEL: Calypso is back, and this time she's out to get Daredevil. Can the Man Without Fear defeat her magic spells? **$1.25**

Ghost Rider #31

Infinity War #6


Cyberforce #2



Eclipso #1

Darkhawk #21
MARVEL: Return to Forever p1- Starting the storyline that will reveal the secrets of Darkhawk's origins. **$1.25**

Deathstroke #16
DC COMICS: Total Chaos p7- When Deathstroke escapes capture and meets Lord Chaos, he's given a choice between death and slavery. **$1.75**

Eclipso #1
DC COMICS: Eclipso, the god of vengeance continues to spread his evil over the Earth, as he takes control of a South American town. **$1.25**

The Eternal Warrior #5
VALIANT: Gilad's battle with the One reaches its climax as the Rising Spirit (soon to get his own title) guest-stars.**$2.25**

Excalibur #56
MARVEL: Captain Britain and Psylocke must fight for their lives against their own brother, Jamie Braddock, when he attacks Excalibur. **$1.75**

Ghost Rider #31
MARVEL: All of the "Rise of the Midnight Sons" characters band together to defeat Lilith's newest and deadliest spawn—Dan Ketch! **$2.50**

Green Lantern: Ganthet's Tale #1
DC COMICS: Hal Jordan and a Guardian named Ganthet explore the true origins of the Guardians, and a crime that may destroy the universe! **$5.95**

Grendel: War Child #2
DARK HORSE: Grendel and Jupiter Assante continue their dangerous trek across America's wastelands. Will they survive New York City? **$2.50**

Harbinger #12
VALIANT: When the rest of the Harbinger kids can't help her, Flamingo must fight for her life against Rock alone. **$2.50**

MORE PICKS

L.O.D.K. Annual #2

John Byrne's Next Men #7

Incredible Hulk #399
MARVEL: The Hulk returns to the original Gamma Bomb test site to finally put some ghosts to rest. **$1.25**

Infinity War #6
MARVEL: Galactus is down! The Heroes are down! The two universes are merging! The Magus has won! Kiss the Marvel Universe good-bye!!! **$2.50**

Iron Man #286
MARVEL: After Iron Man (Rhodey) defeats some old enemies in his new armor, the Avengers West Coast mistakenly attack him! **$1.25**

Legend of the Dark Knight #39
DC COMICS: A decrepit Bruce Wayne is in the detox ward of Gotham Hospital to find out that his life as Batman was just a wild alcoholic's dream. **$1.75**

L.E.G.I.O.N. '92 #47
DC COMICS: Lobo battles Hal Jordan for control of Jordan's power ring! Also, the virus that destroyed Arga Prime is headed for Cairn. **$1.50**

Lobo: Infanticide #2
DC COMICS: Lobo reports to boot camp, were everyone there is one of his illegitimate offspring—all who want him dead! **$1.50**

Magnus: Robot Fighter #19
VALIANT: Magnus fights against the Synchrons, troops, and all of North Am in this climax of the Mekman battle with everything at stake! **$2.25**

Marvel Comics Presents #115
MARVEL: Wolverine arrives at the CIA lab to witness the return of Typhoid Mary and Ghost Rider and Iron Fist's adventure continues. **$1.50**

Morbius #3
MARVEL: It's a rematch between Morbius and Spider-Man, but neither of them realizes how they're both about to fall into a sinister conspiracy. **$1.75**

Namor #32
MARVEL: It's the final showdown between Namor and Dr Doom. **$1.25**

Next Men #7
DARK HORSE: It's been six months since the events in issue #5, and now the Next Men have costumes, code names, training, and hair! By John Byrne. **$2.50**

Night Thrasher #2
MARVEL: Night Thrasher tracks Chord's kidnappers to Hong Kong, where he confronts the bio-chemically enhanced assassin Tantrum. **$2.00**

Nomad #7
MARVEL: In this Infinity War crossover, Nomad must fight the evil doppelganger of the X-Men's Gambit! **$1.75**

The Poison Tomorrow
DC COMICS: A deadly plague is spreading and the Black Canary is infected. Can Batman and Green Arrow find the source before millions die? **$5.95**

Punisher: Back to School Special
MARVEL: The Punisher poses as a substitute gym teacher to shut down a gang that's dealing guns in the school. **$2.95**

Punisher War Zone #9
MARVEL: Rosalie Carbone's unleased the Magnificent Seven—assassins she's paid five million dollars to kill the Punisher! **$1.75**

Sandman #43
DC COMICS: Brief Lives p3- Sandman and Delirium learn more about the departure of Destruction by talking to some old friends of their missing sibling. **$1.50**

Shadowhawk #2
IMAGE: Shadowhawk faces the fiery new villain Arson, as we learn how mob-queen Maxima Bodd earned the name Vendetta! **$1.95**

Night Thrasher #2

Nomad #7

MORE PICKS

Shadowman #8
VALIANT: Shadowman confronts the Laughter in the Dark in the conclusion to The Shadow War. **$2.50**

Silver Surfer #74
MARVEL: The Surfer, Firelord, Nova and Airwalker seek out Terrax to form a team that might be able to defeat Morg—Galactus's latest herald. **$1.25**

Slapstick #1
MARVEL: Steve Harmon's been transformed into a bizarre shape-shifting creature called Slapstick, and he's out to save the world from alien invaders. **$1.25**

Solar, Man of the Atom #15
VALIANT: Solar begins his new life in California, thanks to his new writer, Bob Layton. **$2.25**

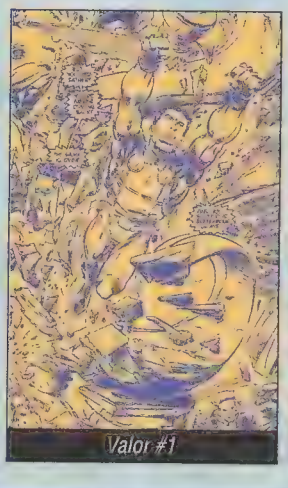
Spawn #5
IMAGE: With a full understanding of his powers, Spawn puts himself in the middle of the police/gang tension. **$1.95**

Spirits of Vengeance #4
MARVEL: Deathwatch's friends, Hag and Troll, return to take their revenge on Ghost Rider and Johnny Blaze. **$1.75**

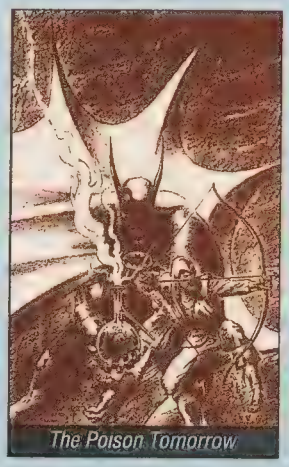
Superman, Man of Steel #17
DC COMICS: Doomsday is coming! Get a glimpse of this new character who will have a chilling effect on the life of the Man of Steel. **$1.25**

Team Titans #3
DC COMICS: Total Chaos p9- The Titans fight for the fate of the world as one of the Titans loses their life! **$1.75**

The Terminator: Endgame #1
DARK HORSE: In the last Terminator series ever, Skynet sends back a giant Terminator to attack Sarah Connor during the birth of her son! **$2.50**


Valor #1

X-Men: Animated Series #1


The Poison Tomorrow

Terminator: Endgame #1

Timber Wolf #1
DC COMICS: Straight out of the Legion of Super-Heroes, Timber Wolf stars in his own 20th century mini-series. **$1.25**

Valor #1
DC COMICS: Valor, straight out of *Eclipso: The Darkness Within*, discovers the scope of his powers as he confronts Lex Luthor. **$1.25**

Warlock & Infinity Watch #10
MARVEL: Thanos confronts his evil doppelganger in this no-holds barred battle to rock the universe. **$1.75**

WildC.A.T.s #3
IMAGE: Cabal's evil plan is coming together, and WildC.A.T.s must kill the Vice-President to stop him! Also, a preview of Whilce Portacio's WetWorks. **$1.95**

X-Factor #84
MARVEL: X-Ecutioner's Song p2- X-Factor attacks X-Force while trying to apprehend Cable, and when the X-Men arrive, which side will they choose? **$1.50**

X-Force #16
MARVEL: X-Ecutioner's Song p4- The X-Men launch their attack against Apocalypse as X-Force joins the other X-Teams. Also, Bishop and Wolverine team-up to find Cable. **$1.50**

X-Men #14
MARVEL:
X-Ecutioner's Song p3- The X-Men meet Apocalypse's Four Horsemen as X-Force goes into hiding. **$1.50**

X-Men: The Animated Series #1
MARVEL: Adapting the new X-Men animated series, this first issue features Jubilee vs. Sentinels. **$1.25**

X-O Manowar #11
VALIANT: This issue begins the "Seed of Destruction" saga, where the armor's greatest secret is revealed! Guest starring Solar. **$2.25**

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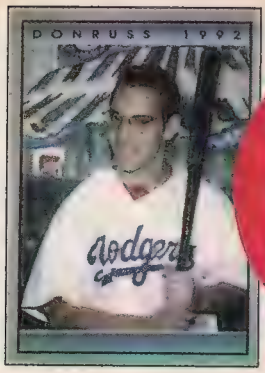


The Wizard Of Cards

By Stephen Shamus

Welcome back to this month's Wizard of Cards! This month we'll talk about some new products and the market in general.

The big fad right now seems to be insert cards. It's as if the people buying the cards could care less about the regular cards in hopes of finding one of the short-printed insert cards. It all started with the release of the **Marvel Universe I** trading cards that were issued about three years ago. Today, the five-card insert sells for twice as much as the entire 162-card regular set. This trend continued through **Star Trek**, **Mickey Mouse**, **Marvel II and III**, **DC Cosmic Cards**, etc. These holograms or prisms all sell for big money. The theory behind the inserts selling the product proved correct when series such as **Yo! MTV Raps**, **G.I. Joe**, and other cards failed miserably due to lack of collector interest. You can even look at the new **Stadium Club Batman** as the most recent example of a card losing collectors' interest due to lack of any short-printed insert cards.

The insert card craze will not stop here though, folks. Comic Images started a new prism craze with its debut of inserts in the **Spider-Man** trading card set. They continued using prisms as inserts through **Boris II**, **Olivia**, **Youngblood**, and **Spider-Man II**. However, Comic Images has taken the insert card craze a step further in two ways. First, there is a set on the way from those crazy guys over at Valiant. The set will contain 100 quality cards of the Valiant universe. The Valiant titles are among the hottest-selling books in the hobby today. With the comic books of these titles selling for big bucks, this should do wonders for the cards they are releasing. There is a new twist to the insert card set, though. The insert set will be six "chromium" cards. This is a new type of card, and judging from the samples I've seen, it should set the market on fire. Collectors of any kind of cards will love these, and they're much better than any inserts you've seen so far.

Comic Images is trying another new breakthrough.They will be releasing a 72-card **Silver Surfer** set. This is not just any set. Every card will be a prism. That's right, all 72 prism cards.

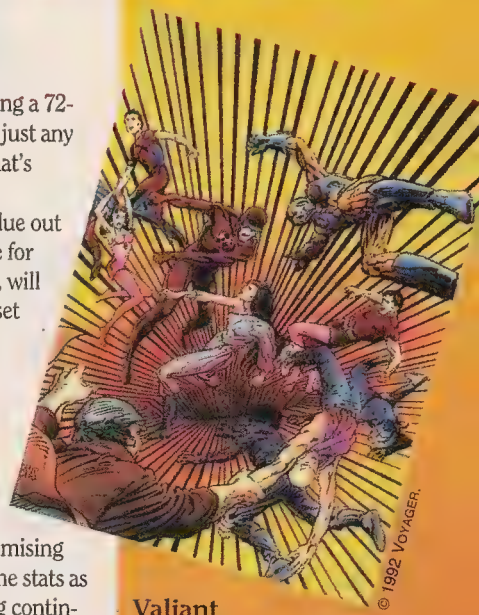
Fangoria will also have a set, due out sometime in October, just in time for Halloween. This set, like Valiant's, will have a six-card chromium insert set randomly packed in. Can you say "pack- busting?"

Just as I thought the pornographic craze was ending, I received in the mail a flyer for **Thee Dolls Series II**. There will be 50 new girls from clubs across America in all-new compromising positions. They contain all the same stats as the first series, and the numbering continues in sequence from 51-100.

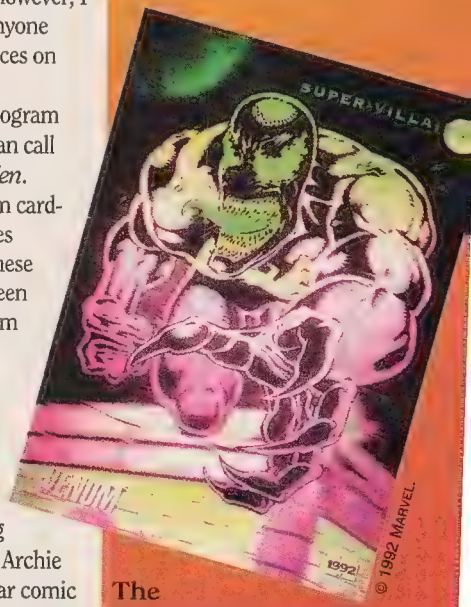
In other news, retailers received special packs of **Spider-Man** cards for every 25 issues they ordered of *Amazing Spider-Man* #365. The cards are okay-looking, however, I have seen few for sale anywhere. Anyone with any information regarding prices on these babies, please write to me.

Marvel also gave away some hologram cardboard (that's the only thing I can call it) as an incentive for ordering *X-Men*. Each store received a gold hologram cardboard and a silver for every 25 copies ordered. I see big price ranges on these cardboard holograms as well. I've seen the silver ones selling anywhere from $15-$50, and gold ones from $25-$150, so if anyone has seen any changing hands at any prices, please drop me a line.

Skybox International has also announced that it has received two new licenses to produce trading card series. The two licenses are for Archie and Garfield, two of the most popular comic strip characters of the newspapers. The **Garfield** cards will be a 100-card set and will be drawn by Jim Davis. The **Archie** cards will be a 90-card set by various artists.



Valiant enters the trading card arena with their Unity set by Comic Images.



The hottest things on the card market aren't the cards, they're the special inserts.

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Issue No. 6
Shipping This October
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BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

FROM

VALIANT

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Toying Around

With Brian Cunningham

In *Wizard* #12 I promised toy reviews, and since I've seen all of the *Batman Returns* and a handful of X-Men figures, I'll start with them. Some are good and some are not. Which ones, you ask? Well...I'll keep you guessing for a few paragraphs.

BATMAN RETURNS

I saw *Batman Returns* on the first Saturday of its release. I figured if I went to the early 11:00 am show, it wouldn't be crowded. Guess what? When I got to the theater, I thought there was a political rally or something! I think by the time I got to the box-office, I had grown a full beard! Sheesh!

I liked the movie, but I wouldn't want to see it again. And before this column turns into Hollywood Heroes, I have a question to ask. Why do parents bring infants to see a dark, grim, PG-13 movie like *Batman Returns*? All the infants do is cry and cry and CRY, and they take away from the parents (and the audience's) enjoyment of the film. And another thing!! (Uh-oh I'm starting to complain. I'd better get back to the point of this article!)

The *Batman Returns* figures were on the shelves for about a month before the film's actual release. These days, I see quite a lot of the "Thunderwhip" Batman, which is the plain black movie version with a dopey contraption. What I don't see much of are the multicolored Batman. Some of them are pretty neat. I especially like the yellow-clad "Deep Dive" bat-suit.

What I really want to get into, though, are the best parts of the *Batman Returns* line: the new Robin, Catwoman, and Max Schreck. What can I say about Robin? He looks awesome! He's slightly shorter than Batman and that two-tone cape is visually impressive. (Hey-did you know this costume was designed by the great Neal Adams? Now ya know!) The only thing about Robin that bugs me is that his head is so flat that you can land a helicopter on it.! No kidding!

And Catwoman...? She looks really gawky. Her legs are slightly bent and "on the prowl" but she still looks bad. Out of all the figures, I looked forward to this one the most and was greatly disappointed. She'll definitely sell well, which is a good sign for more female action figures on the rise, but there's no excuse for making an appealing character into a lame figure.

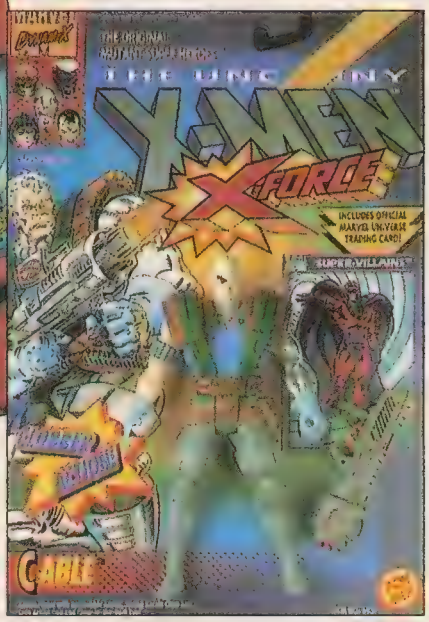
This brings me to Max Schreck. I must confess,—I lied when I said that I've seen all of the *Batman Returns* figures. I've never seen the Max Schreck figure. This is because he is the rarest of the whole bunch, (he's being shipped maybe one per case) and he might only be sold in certain parts of the country. Now that's rare!

THE X-MEN

On the July 4th weekend, I managed to grab the first new X-Men figures to hit comic stores. They were Wolverine (second edition-his original suit), Wolverine (third edition—seen in *Uncanny X-Men* #275), Forge, and Mr. Sinister. Believe it or not, they look no different from their toy fair prototypes. Overall, the figures have improved a hundred-fold from the first series of X-Men figures. The basic anatomy looks better--they're less stiff looking, and the features actually work.

The Second Edition Wolverine is my favorite of the four. I've always preferred his original costume to that brown one. His waist swivels so he can slice up bad guys but his helmet is not removable. The Third Edition has the same features as the Second sans a helmet. The bad thing about both Wolverines is that while the claws have a spring action, they do not stay retracted like the First Edition. Also, both Wolverines are kinda tall compared to the First Edition. For a 5'3" guy, he's the same size as Colossus! On a good note, though, both heads are well done. The Second

THE BAT-SYMBOL ™ & © 1992 DC COMICS. WOLVERINE ™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.



Edition mask is cool and the Third Edition helmetless face looks perfect, compared to the constipated-looking First Edition.

Forge looks great also. The best thing about him is that his feature actually works! Forge carries a high-tech gun and has a "quick-draw" feature that isn't half bad. The gun clips onto his leg holster. He also has a transparent bionic arm and leg that don't look like Forge's bionics, but I'll let it slide this time.

Mr. Sinister is...well, Mr. Sinister! He's big and mean looking with light-up eyes and a neat cape. He's cool. 'Nuff said.

More reviews are pending as they are released. So there you have it. Do you agree or disagree? Let me know.

TOYING AROUND NEWS

Did anybody notice that there's something missing in this section? Yep, you guessed it - there's no price guide this month. Or next month, for that matter. The price guide is being revamped and will return in two to three months. By then, it'll really kick some butt!

People are sending me pictures of incredible home-made figures, but I can't print them. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE make sure they are crystal clear and focused! You wouldn't believe how many great figures were rejected by my art director because of partially fuzzy photos! If you already sent in partially unclear photos, retake them and send 'em in! Yours was probably one of the rejected ones.

BOBA FETT UPDATE

I got some response to my Boba Fett question on whether or not a detachable missile exists. Matt Slaybaugh of Dublin, OH has a distinct memory of sticking pretzel sticks into a hole on Boba Fett's backpack and believes that hole was where the missile detached. The mystery continues with an explanation by Todd Merrell of Portland, OR. He says he's seen the back of a Star Wars card describing the send-away deal and a picture of Boba Fett with a detachable missile. Later offers did not have a picture of the mechanism, but just described the character.

Todd also listed tons of stuff that's wrong with the Star Wars price guide and gave me a wealth of information to make it more accurate. Just to give you an example, the original Star Wars figures have pictures of 12 figures on the backs of their cards, later they had 20 and then 21; the ones with 12 are worth more. Thanks, Todd, for pointing these things out. However, to be honest, the prices listed in the guide are the prices these figures generally sell for at conventions, where variations are not as important. I suppose I should have pointed that out, because you are not alone in your complaint. Rest assured, a lot of your other information will definitely be taken to heart!

Top 10 most wanted action figures

1 Ghost Rider
2 Darkhawk
3 Lobo
4 Thanos
5 Adam Warlock, Galactus (tie).
6 Nightwing, Deathstroke (tie)
7 Nova, Beast (tie)
8 Rogue, Hawkeye (tie)
9 Psylock
10 Carnage

No surprise here, as Ghost Rider is still the most requested figure. Everything else remained pretty constant except for Carnage, who entered the charts at #10. Send your votes today

RED STAR

Create Your Own Figure Dept.

The Russian member of the New Titans comes from Tim Frederick of Milford, Connecticut, and was originally a ToyBiz Green Lantern figure. He's a unique choice, and he came out really cool, too.

Send your original figure photos to:

Figures of Speech
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet NY 10954-0648

Red Star™ & © 1992 DC Comics. Forge & Cable™ & © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group.

Hey, "Figures of Speech" ain't here, either! Don't worry, that'll be back next month, so don't lose any sleep over it! (As if you would!)

Next issue: We discuss the political status of America and its impact on social values...NOT! No way—we're gonna blow you away. ■

WIZARD Contest

Grand Prize:

A set of *X-Men* #1 A-E autographed by Jim Lee!

X-MEN ™ & © 1992 MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

First Prizes (3):

A limited edition silver X-Men premium hologram *or* a Wizard gold-foil Spawn trading card! *YOUR CHOICE*!

Second Prizes (6):

A set of the 1992 SkyBox X-Men trading cards (cards only) *or* a complete set of *Infinity War* #1-6! *YOUR CHOICE*!

Third Prizes (15):

A limited edition San Diego Comic Con *Wizard* #1 or a grey-Hulk variant *Wizard* #6! *YOUR CHOICE*!

Congratulations

to the winners of April's Dark Knight contest:

Grand Prize:

Brandon Hymen (age 22) - Stafford, VA

First Prize:

Tim Ehrlick (age 13) - Davie, FL
Torrey Mitchell (age 19) - San Bernadino, CA
Dan Terilli (age 13) - Warwick, RI

Second Prize:

Nicholas Canton (age 14) - Holbrook, NY
Justin Cassidy (age 15) - The Colony, TX
Noah Fine (age 15) - Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Nick Oxford (age 9) - Orangevale, CA
Alexandre Su (age 12) - East Brunswick, NJ

№14

1. Ren and _____ :
2. Vampire member of Team Titans:
3. Valiant's Eternal _____ :
4. Drew the cover to *Wizard* #4:
5. Saturday Night ____ :
6. Benjamin J. Grimm:
7. Kirk's best friend:
8. Villain of DC Comic's summer annuals:

Enter Now To Win!

Official 1992 WIZARD Contest #14

YES, enter me in the 1992 Wizard "Jim Lee" contest for a chance to win a set of *X-Men* #1 A-E signed by Jim Lee!

Name (please print clearly) Age

Phone #

Home Address

City State Zip

Store Name

Address

Entry Form

1st Prize Choice	2nd Prize Choice	3rd Prize Choice
check one:	check one:	check one:
☐ X-Men Hologram	☐ X-Men Card Set	☐ ComicCon *Wizard* #1
☐ Gold Spawn Card	☐ Gold Spawn Card	☐ *Wizard* #6

Jim Lee Code:

Wizard Clue: It's good for Jim's image...

Contest Rules

Answer the questions in the boxes supplied. In each answer you will find a circled letter. After you have completed all the questions, the circled letters from the answers, when unscrambled, will form the Contest Code Word. Write this word on the official entry form supplied below or a 3x5 index card.

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and Jim Lee's evil twin brother.

Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the name of the store where you purchase your comics, and the Jim Lee Code on an "Official Entry Form" or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry individually to "Jim Lee Code #14," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the prize winners and are not transferable. Only one prize winner per household. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof.

All entries must be postmarked by October 24, 1992 and received at contest headquarters by October 25, 1992. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries.

Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on October 26, 1992 by Wizard Press. One (1) grand prize- *X-Men* #1 A-E autographed by Jim Lee. Three (3) first prizes- Marvel's silver X-Men premium hologram or a Wizard gold Spawn trading card (winner's choice). Six (6) second prizes- full set of SkyBox's Jim Lee's X-Men trading cards (cards only) or *Infinity War* #1-6 (winner's choice). Fifteen (15) third prizes- a limited edition Comic Con *Wizard* #1 or a grey-Hulk variant *Wizard* #6 (winner's choice).

For a list of winners, which will be available after December 1, 1992, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Jim Lee Winners," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648.

SEND TO:
JIM LEE CODE #14
P.O.BOX 648
NANUET, NY 10954-0648

This Month's Number ONES

Comic book collectors place a great deal of importance on the #1 issues. Since it's tricky to determine whether a book will succeed, you have to choose your comics very carefully and wisely. #1 issues have been known to appreciate considerably when a series becomes very popular. Here we have compiled for you all the #1 issues shipping for September. Happy Hunting!

Batman Adventures #1
from DC Comics

The Ferret #1
from Malibu

Shazam! Archives Volume 1
from DC Comics

Avalon #1
Comico

Batman Adventures #1
DC Comics

Boof #1
Iconographix

Congorilla #1
DC Comics

Dragonfire: UFO Wars #1
Night Wynd

Eclipso #1
DC Comics

Ferret #1
Malibu

Green Lantern: Ganthet's Tale #1
DC Comics

H.A.R.D. Corps #1
Valiant

Herbie #1
Dark Horse

Joe Sinn #1
Gauntlet

Kato of the Green Hornet II #1
Now

Mask Returns #1
Dark Horse

Nightstalkers #1
Marvel

Nitron #1
United

Oldblood #1
Parody

Orion #1
Dark Horse

Sewage Dragon #1
Parody

Shazam! Archives Vol 1
DC Comics

Slapstick #1
Marvel

Soviet Super Soldiers #1
Marvel

Spider-Man: 2099 #1
Marvel

Spitting Image #1
Eclipse

Supreme #1
Image

Timber Wolf #1
DC Comics

Ugly Reality #1
Iconographix

Valor #1
DC Comics

White Trash #1
Tundra

X-Men: The Animated Series #1
Marvel

Yawn #1
Parody

TOP 100 AUGUST 1992

Here's the list for August...the countdown of the top selling titles sold as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.

1 Cable #1
2 WildC.A.T.s #2
3 Youngblood #0
4 X-Men #13
5 Cyberforce #1
6 Spawn #4
7 Youngblood #4
8 Youngblood #3
9 Shadowhawk #1
10 X-Force #15
11 Uncanny X-Men #293
12 Brigade #2
13 Darkhold #1
14 Infinity War #5
15 Spider-Man #27
16 Amazing Spider-Man #367
17 Wolverine #62
18 Ghost Rider #30
19 Savage Dragon #3
20 Spirits of Vengeance #3
21 Lobo: Infanticide #1
22 Morbius #2
23 X-Factor #83
24 Batman: Sword of Azrael #1
25 Night Thrasher: Four Control #1
26 Incredible Hulk #398
27 Warlock & Infinity Watch #9
28 Punisher War Zone #8
29 Robocop vs Terminator #4
30 Shadow of the Bat #5
31 Silver Sable #5
32 Silver Surfer #73
33 New Warriors #28
34 Guardians of the Galaxy #29
35 Star Wars: Dark Empire #5
36 Eclipso: Darkness Within #2
37 Punisher #71
38 Web of Spider-Man #93
39 Legends Of The Dark Knight #38
40 Rai #30
41 Guy Gardner #1
42 Fantastic Four #369
43 Spectacular Spider-Man #193
44 Batman Annual #16
45 Excalibur #55
46 Spider-Man: Soul Of The Hunter
47 Batman #485
48 Deathlok #16
49 Dark Horse Comics #1
50 Nomad #6
51 Punisher Armory #4
52 Punisher War Journal #47
53 Darkstars #1
54 Wolverine: Evilution
55 Daredevil #309
56 Darkhawk #20
57 Grendel: War Child #1
58 Doctor Strange #46
59 Team Titans #2
60 Detective Comics #652
61 Detective Comics #650
62 Detective Comics #651
63 Blood & Glory #1 (resolicitation)
64 Quasar #39
65 Wonder Man #14
66 Moon Knight #43
67 Marvel Comics Presents #113
68 Thor #452
69 Captain America #408
70 Marvel Comics Presents #112
71 Iron Man #285
72 Avengers #354
73 Avengers #355
74 Avengers West Coast #87
75 Namor The Sub-Mariner #31
76 Cage #7
77 What If? #42
78 Deathstroke the Terminator #15
79 New Titans #91
80 Adventures of Superman Annual #4
81 Sandman #42
82 Justice League Europe Annual #3
83 Superman Special #1
84 Classic Star Wars #1
85 Alpha Flight #113
86 Green Lantern #30
87 Green Lantern #31
88 Sleepwalker #17
89 Justice League Europe #43
90 Tekworld #2
91 Superman #72
92 Moon Knight Special #1
93 Warheads #5
94 Hells Angels #4
95 Justice League America #67
96 Eternal Warrior #4
97 Superman: Man of Steel #16
98 Adventures of Superman #495
99 Archer & Armstrong #4
100 Action Comics #682

Who's In the TOP 100?

	# books in top 10	# books in top 50	# books in top 100
Marvel	3 (-4)	29 (-10)	56 (-1)
DC Comics	- (+0)	8 (+2)	27 (-5)
Image	7 (+4)	9 (+5)	9 (+5)
Dark Horse	- (+0)	3 (+2)	5 (+1)
Valiant	- (+0)	1 (+1)	3 (+0)

(+ or - indicates change from last month's listings)

GRAPHIC NOVELS & TPBs

1 Batman: Night Cries HC GN
2 Marvel Universe Master Edition #23
3 Infinity Gauntlet Trade Paperback
4 Carl Barks Library Album #8
5 Indispensable Calvin & Hobbes
6 Clive Barker's Dread SC
7 Star Trek: The Modala Imperative TP
8 Disney Comics Special: Donald/Scrooge
9 Hellblazer: Original Sins TP
10 Batman: Bride of the Demon SC GN

SEE PAGE 101

TOP 10 SEPTEMBER - 1992

We keep a very close watch on all the hottest books changing hands throughout the country. Here are the 10 best-selling comics:

1 Harbinger #1

Artist: Dave Lapham
Writer: Jim Shooter

Now on its third month as as the #1 book in the country, *Harbinger* #1 shows no signs of slowing down, even with a really hefty price tag attached to it. For those of you unfamiliar with Harbinger's publisher, (Valiant owned by Voyager Communications) here is a quick recap of their outfit. Headed up by Barry Windsor-Smith and Bob Layton, Valiant is producing a line of comics almost unheard of in today's market, one in which the main focus is quality entertainment, a product you can read, not just collect. This has earned them a growing number of die-hard fans, who have helped push Valiant titles to the top of the charts. What makes this title stand out from the rest of Valiant's crop? *Harbinger* #1 had a print run of under 40,000 copies, making it actually worth its current price.

2 Solar #10

Artist: D. David Perlin
Writer: Jim Shooter

Cool cover, huh? No, it's not a mistake, that black rectangular picture on the right is the cover to the embossed *Solar* #10, entering the Top Ten in the #1 contender spot. Aside from being a Valiant back issue, why is this book so darn popular? Well, it features the final installment of "Alpha and Omega" (the origin of Solar), a guest-appearance by the Harbinger Foundation, the first appearance of Geoff the Geomancer and the Eternal Warrior! With the print run fairly low on this book and all of the awesome goings-on inside, it wouldn't be surprising to see it uproot *Harbinger* as King of the Hill.

3 Amazing Spider-Man #101

Artist: Rick Leonardi
Writer:Chris Claremont

Pole-vaulting from the #10 spot to the #3 position since last issue, the first appearance of Morbius, Marvel's blood-sucking bad boy, has really hit it big. At a time when all the really popular heroes enjoy kicking butt, Morbius takes it just a tad further by chomping the bad guys and drinking their blood. With his new monthly feature strongly received and well underway, *Amazing Spider-Man* #101 seems poised to make his next course consist of Harbinger burgers, extra rare.

4 Spawn #1

Artist: Todd McFarlane
Writer: Todd McFarlane

Slipping from last month's standings, the first monthly Image book remains a hot back issue nonetheless. With the high profile of the Image characters and the even higher profile of their creators, it's no wonder that their two premiere books *(Youngblood* is at #7) are enjoying great success. What makes Spawn a little more unique than your run-of-the-mill hero is that he's not some revenge-crazed psycho-path. Instead, his main ambition is to return to the woman he loves, and to the life that has passed him by.

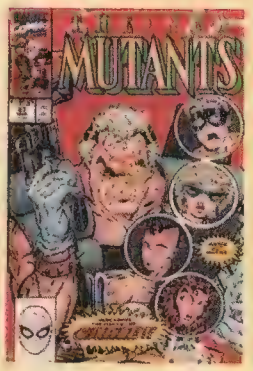
Amazing Spider-Man #361

Artist: Mark Bagley
Writer:David Michelinie

Re-entering the Top Ten at a much stronger position is the first full appearance of comicdom's favorite homicidal maniac/ extraterrestrial/ parasitic offspring of an otherwordly pair of longjohns, Carnage. Not that there's a lot of them around these days, but Carnage takes the cake. Though the human host of Carnage, Cletus Kasady, first appeared in the pages of *Amazing Spider-Man* #344, he didn't really hit it big until the three-part storyline entitled "Venom-Spawn," running through *Spidey* #s 361-363. And for those of you who think Carnage is dead — c'mon, this is Marvel.

New Mutants #87

Artist: Rob Liefeld
Writer:Louise Simonson



The only book that has remained on the charts since the first Top Ten chart back in *Wizard* #1, *New Mutants* #87 is consistent, as well as a fan favorite. Besides being one of the earliest Liefield *New Mutant* issues, it's also the first appearance of Cable, Marvel's bionic bad boy, who plays a huge role in this Fall's mutant epic, "The X-Ecutioner's Song." With that, his still-available two-issue mini-series, and his ties to ultra-hot *X-Force*, Cable's gonna last at least another 14 months on the charts.

Youngblood #1

Artist: Rob Liefeld
Writer:Hank Kanalz

What do you get when you take one of the most popular artists in comics today, yank him away from the most powerful publisher of comics, and place him in the untested waters of an alternative market? Well, you get Rob Liefield's *Youngblood* #1, one of the best-selling alternative comics of all time (over 500,000 copies), and one of the ten hottest comics in the country. With the fan following the creators at Image have, plus the exciting characters and personalities that fill their comics, it wouldn't come as a surprise if more Image titles filled the charts.

Uncanny X-Men #201

Artist: Rick Leonardi
Writer:Chris Claremont

Holding tight in the #8 position is the ever-controversial "Mystery Baby" issue of *Uncanny X-Men*, #201. This former holder of the #1 position (for four months, I might add) is still a hot item, but fans are tired of waiting for an answer to the question: "Is that @#$*^! baby really Cable as an infant, or what? Hopefully, with the two-issue *Cable* mini-series and "The X-Ecutioner's Song" underway, fans will finally know the answer, and this book will come to a resting place on the charts, ending its see-saw swing up and down each month.

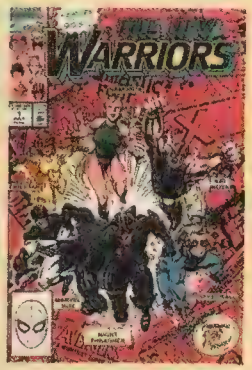
John Byrne's Next Men #1

Artist: John Byrne
Writer: John Byrne

The first Dark Horse book to make it into the Top Ten, and it's thanks to the super talent of one Mr. John Byrne. For those of you who are big fans of John's stuff from the pages of *The Fantastic Four*, *Uncanny X-Men*, and The *Avengers*, check out *Next Men* for some of his best stuff yet. The story revolves around a group of escaped top-secret government guinea pigs, who possess incredible powers and must now try to fit into a world that doesn't meet their expectations. Really a cool storyline; check it out.

New Warriors #1

Artist: Mark Bagley
Writer:Fabian Nicieza



Definitely one of the most underrated when it came out a couple of years back, *New Warriors* #1 has really caught a strong core of fans that has brought this book into its own, making it a hot back issue and collectors' item. The storyline revolves around a group of young superheroes who deal with ordinary teenage problems, as well as the usual butt-stomping action. A great style of storytelling that appeals to the average comic fan, along with a normal, non-hyped print run makes *New Warriors* #1 a truly good collectors' buy.

WIZARD MARKET WATCH

★ A quick glance at the Top 100 list supplied by Diamond Comic Distributors will demonstrate the power of Image Comics Press. The Top Ten prestigious seats, usually held by the juggernaut known as Marvel, have been usurped by the boys at Image. Be it *Cyberforce*, *Spawn*, *Youngblood*, *WildC.A.T.s*, or *Supreme*, every title released by the mighty "I" seems to be made of gold. As for the skeptics who felt that the back issue orders on the titles would be nill, reports indicate that not only have the prices increased, but some locations are having difficulty keeping the books in stock. Keep a close eye on Image.

★ DC seems confused about its direction. Are they committed to producing books for younger kids? The cancellation of Impact seems to indicate that they aren't. What about producing more mature-oriented material? DC's branching out with titles such as *Sandman*, *Doom Patrol*, and *Shade* in the Vertigo imprint seems a step in the wrong direction after the Piranha Press mess. How about producing good mainstream superhero titles? Really confusing signals here. While the "Total Chaos" series running through the Titans line of books is a good idea, a few titles seem to be headed in the pre-Crisis direction. The *Justice League of America/Europe* are two good examples, as both titles are moving toward the silly storylines that Crisis was supposed to eliminate. Someone better grab the reins and steer DC in the right direction (or any direction).

★ Marvel's mutant comics continue to be the strong point of comicdom as they dominate the top of the charts and sell briskly as back issues too. To further fan the flames of Marvel's mutants, the two-issue *Cable* mini-series and the twelve-part "X-Ecutioner's Song" are eagerly anticipated by fans and should prove to be tremendous hits. Other hot picks from the Marvel stable include the first appearance of Morbius in *Amazing Spidey* #101, back issues of the new *Ghost Rider*, and just about all the early issues of *The Fantastic Four*.

★ Most of the big movement this month seems to be happening in the Silver Age comics, with both DC and Marvel experiencing big booms. Valiant leads the way on the newer back issue hot list as *Harbinger*, *Shadowman*, *Rai*, *Magnus*, *Solar*, *Archer & Armstrong*, *Eternal Warrior*, *X-O*, *H.A.R.D. Corps*, and *Unity* all continue their consistent climb up the hot charts.

★ A few more titles experiencing hot streaks include *John Byrne's Next Men*, *Punisher War Zone*, *Shadow of the Bat*, *Eclipso*, and early appearances of Adam Warlock and Thanos, most notably in the pages of *Marvel Premiere* and *Strange Tales*.

★ On the Marvel side, the big Silver Age movers include *Amazing Spider-Man* and *The Fantastic Four*, while DC's main draw is none other than everyone's favorite Beetlejuice lookalike, *Batman*. Both his regular titles, *Batman* and *Detective Comics* lead the way. As a quick side note, a great deal of the lesser-known Marvel titles from the Silver Age and the early '70s that normally get pushed to the wayside have really started to move. Old-timers like *The Defenders*, *Chamber of Darkness*, and *The Champions* have caught the attention of collectors who realize that these issues are not easy to find in mint condition, and they have begun to dry up the market on titles of this sort. Other Silver Age comics experiencing a boost in the sales department are the Gold Key *Dr. Solar*, *Magnus*, and *Turok* titles, mostly because of their red-hot counterparts currently being published by Valiant. Owned by Voyager Communications, the relatively new Valiant has really come into the limelight after a slow start in the direct market. After some unimpressive beginning titles dealing with wrestlers and video games, Valiant has produced a line of super hero titles that are not only the hottest back issues in today's market, but some of the most entertaining in the medium as well. ■

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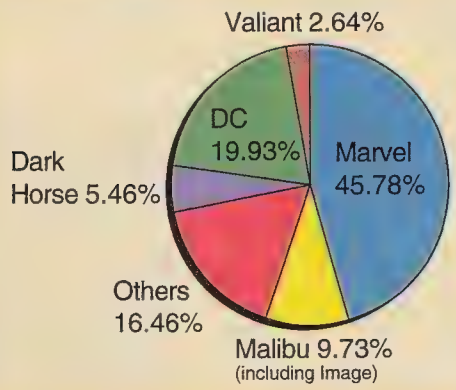
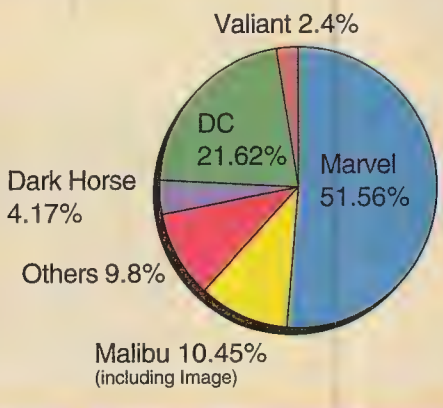


Dollar Share of the Comic Book Market for July, according to Capital City Distribution

© 1992 Capital City Distribution



Piece Share of the Comic Book Market for July, according to Capital City Distribution

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

1. TODD McFARLANE
Spawn

2. JIM LEE
WildC.A.T.s

3. ROB LIEFELD
Youngblood

4. DALE KEOWN
upcoming: *The PITT*

5. MARC SILVESTRI
Cyberforce

6. WHILCE PORTACIO
Uncanny X-Men,
upcoming: *WetWorks*

7. MARK BAGLEY
Amazing Spider-Man

8. RON LIM
Infinity War

9. JOHN BYRNE
Next Men, She-Hulk

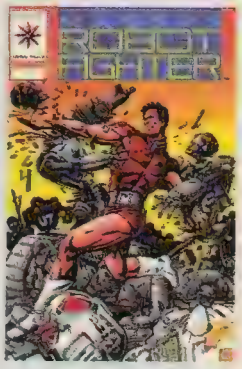
10. ART THIBERT
X-Men,
upcoming: *Nightwing*

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The special limited-edition comics that Valiant has been producing will no longer appear in the Top Ten Hottest Comics located on page 98. These limited-edition issues are some of the most popular and heavily traded sets of comics now, but this is largely due to their limited availability. To constantly compare these to normal release issues is unfair, and not an accurate representation of the back-issue comic market. Again, these books are heavily in demand, worth a great deal of money, and make great additions to any collection. For those of you who are not familiar with these issues, Wizard has put together a quick rundown of these special editions.

Magnus: Robot Fighter #0 (with card) $85

Magnus: Robot Fighter #0 (w/o card) $40



Magnus #0: two versions of this book exist. The first was an issue recounting the origin of Magnus with a bound-in Barry Windsor-Smith trading card. This version was available to all those who purchased Magnus *#s 1 through 8 — and sent in the redeemable coupons. The second version is identical to the first with the exception of the trading card, and was sent in limited quantities to retail stores as a thank-you.*

Archer & Armstrong #0 Gold Box $125

Next up was the gold logo box Archer & Armstrong *#0, which was given away to those who helped support or promote Valiant in any way.*

Eternal Warrior #1 Gold Box $125

Eternal Warrior #1 Gold Foil Logo $160

There were also two versions of Eternal Warrior *#1. The first simply had a gold-colored logo in the upper left-hand corner, and was meant to be given away as a premium at retailer conventions. The copies were accidentally shipped with regular editions of* Eternal Warrior *#1 and Valiant went back to press, this time adding gold foil to the Warrior logo and using that as the premium.*

Unity #0 Red Bar $125

Lastly, the red logo Unity *#0 was given to retailers in proportion to their reorders of the Unity crossover series. Prices on these books are volatile and vary greatly from region to region.*

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

ALABAMA

SEP 5 AL, BIRMINGHAM, Legends Collectors' Show, Holiday Inn -Airport, Hwy 59 Exit 129. T:20 F:$40 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Dana Pinkard 706-234-8210

SEP 26 AL, HUNTSVILLE, Legend's Collectors' Show, Marriott Inn at the Space Center, 5 Tranquility Dr. T:20 F:$40 A:$1 10am-4pm, Dana Pinkard 706-234-8210

ARIZONA

OCT 3 AZ, PHOENIX, Super-Con, Celebrity Inn, 3333 East Van Buren. A: $3.50, (under 5 free) 10am-5pm, Supercon 916-929-3924

CALIFORNIA

SEP 2 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 5 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 7 CA, FRESNO, Monday Night Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Picadilly Inn University, 4961 N. Cedar (Cedar & Shaw). T:24 F:$35 A:$1, 5pm-9pm, Joe Manzo 209-292-2890

SEP 9 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 12 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 13 CA, SAN DIEGO, Comic Book Show, Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino Del Rio So. A:$3.50 (under5free) 10am-5pm, Supercon 916-929-3924

SEP 16, CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free, 5:00pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 19 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Drive North. T:100 F: $25 A:free, 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 20 CA, BUENA PARK, The Orange County Comic Book & Collectible Show, Buena Park Sequoia Athletic Club,7530 Orangethorpe. T:70 F:$65 A:$5 ($1 goes directly to Cystic Fibrosis Foundation), 10am-4pm, Mark Ransey 714-647-7225

SEP 20 CA, BURLINGAME, Super-Con, Sheraton Hotel 1177 Airport Blvd. A:$3.50 (under 5 free), 10am-5pm, Supercon 916-929-3924

SEP 21 CA, FRESNO, Monday Night Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Picadilly Inn University, 4961 N. Cedar (Cedar & Shaw). T:24 F: $35 A:$1, 5pm-9pm, Joe Manzo 209-292-2890

SEP 23 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Cards/Pins/Comics Show,Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Drive North. T:100, F:$25 A:free, 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 26 CA, WALNUT, Basecall Cards/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Drive North. T:100 F:$24 A:free, 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

SEP 27 CA, GLENDALE, So. California Comic Book, Sport Card, & Collectable Con, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Rd. T:60 F:$50 A:$2.50 (under 6 free) 10am-4pm, Dean Chen 818-842-1861

SEP 30 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Drive North. T:100 F:$25 A:free, 5pm-9:30pm Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

OCT 3 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Comics Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free, 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

OCT 5 CA, FRESNO, Monday Night Baseball Card and Comic Show, Picadilly Inn University, 4961 N.Cedar (Cedar & Shaw). T:24 F:$35 A:$1, 5pm-9pm, Joe Manzo 209-292-2890

OCT 7 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Comic Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A;free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

OCT 10 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Comic Show, Frank and Sone Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free, 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

OCT 11 CA, OAKLAND, Bay Area Comics Convention, Oakland Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive at 14th. COMex 510-222-8663

OCT 17 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Comic Show, Frank and Son Warehouse, 19465 E, Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free, 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

CONNECTICUT

SEP 12-13 CT, HARTFORD, Hartford Civic Center Card and Comic Show, Hartford Civic Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza. T:115 F:$130 A:$3 10am-4pm, Zach Schenker 201-791-1675

SEP 13 CT, DANBURY, Comic Book & Sport Card Show, Danbury Hilton Towers, 18 Old Ridgebury Rd (exit 2 off I-84). T:57 F:$45-$55 A:$2 (under 10 99¢) Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

SEP 24-27 CT, WILAMANTIC, Card Show, Eastbrook Mall, Jct. Rtes 6 and I-95. A:free, Regular mall hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

SEP 26-27 CT, NEW HAVEN, Comics, Toys, and More, New Haven Coliseum, Exit 47 off I-95 Connection to Exit 1. T:65 F:$100 A:$3, Sat.10am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm, Zach Schenker 201-488-6293

SEP 27 CT, MIDDLEBURY, Sportcard, Comics, Racing, & Non-Sport Card Show, Post University Drubner Ctr, Rte 63 at Exit 17 off I-84. T:60 F:$50 A:$2 (under 10 99¢), 10 am -4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

SEP 27 CT, SOUTHBURY, Comic Book & Sport Card Show, Southbury Fire Dept, Main St. South (exit 14 off I-84). T:35 F:$50 A:$2 (under 99¢), Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

OCT 4 CT, STAMFORD, Sportcard, Comics, Racing, & Non-Sport Card Show, Stamford Marriott, 2 Stamford Forum (Exit 8 off I-95). T: 50 F:$55 A:$2 (under 10 99¢), 10am-4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

OCT 11 CT, DANBURY, Comic Book & Sport Card Show, Danbury Hilton Towers, 18 Old Ridgeway Rd (exit 2 off I-84). T:57 F:$45-$55 A:$2 (under 10 99¢), Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

DELAWARE

SEP 13 DE, WILMINGTON, Serendipity Comic Book Show, Sheraton Inn, 4727 Concord Pike. A:$3 11am-4:30pm, Bob Horn 410-398-6685

FLORIDA

SEP 20 FL, PALM BEACH GARDENS, Holy Cow's Monthly Comic Book & C ard Show, Holiday Inn at I-95 and PGA Blvd. T:35 F:$45 A:$1 10am-5pm, Bill Berg 407-743-6595

SEP 20 FL, FT. LAUDERDALE, $250 Give-Away Sportscard & Comic Book Show, Sheraton Suites, 311 North University Drive - next to Fashion Mall. T:40 F:$50 A:$2 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019 or Linda Katz 305-424-1448

OCT 18 FL, FT. LAUDERDALE, $250 Give-Away Sportscard & Comic Book Show, Sheraton Suites, 311 North University Drive -next to Fashion Mall. T:40 F:$50 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019 or Linda Katz 305-424-1448

GEORGIA

SEP 7-9 GA, GAINESVILLE, Collector's Expo Collectibles Show, Lakeshore Mall, Washington St. F:$50 A:free Mall Hours, Dana Pinkard 404-234-8210

OCT 10-11 GA, ROME, Legend's Collectors' Show, Riverbend Mall, Turner-McCall Blvd. T:20-30 F:$35 A:free, Mall Hours, Dana Pinkard 706-234-8210

ILLINOIS

SEP 5-6 IL, ELGIN, Tri-County Comic Book Convention, Hemmens Exhibition Hall, 150 Dexter Ct. T:100 F:$95 A:$4, Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun.10am-4pm, Jim Everett, 708-208-2421

SEP 13 IL, ROSEMONT, America's Largest 1-Day Comic & Card Show, Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8090

SEP 12 IL, ELK GROVE VILLAGE, Monthly Comic Con, Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd. (Rte 83). T:35 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

SEP 12-13 IL, SCHILLER PARK, Comic Book Show, Howard Johnson Hotel, Irving Park & Mannheim Rd. T:75 F:$80 A:$2, Sat, 10am-5pm, Sun.10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8090

SEP 13 IL, CRYSTAL LAKE, Non-Smoking Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, RT 31 & Three Oaks Rd. F:$35 A:$1 10am-3pm, Louis Pinsky 708-567-9543

SEP 13 IL, QUINCY, Falcon Productions Sports Cards & Comics Show, Holiday Inn, 201 S. 3rd St. T:35 F:$30 A:50¢ 9am-3pm, Greg Cox 217-452-3617

SEP 26 IL, ROSEMONT, America's Largest 1-Day Card & Comic Show, Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8090

SEP 27 IL, CHICAGO, Comic & Card Show, Ford City Holiday Inn, 7353 S.Cicero Ave. T:50 F:$35 A:$1, 10am-4pm , Midwest Shows 708-496-8090

SEP 27 IL, ROSEMONT, For Comic Lovers Only, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:45 F:$35 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows, 708-496-8881

OCT 11 IL, CRYSTAL LAKE, Non-Smoking Sports Card & Comics Show, Holiday Inn, Rte 31 & Three Oaks Rd. F:$35 A:$1, 10am-3pm, Louis Pinsky 708-567-9543

INDIANA

SEP 6 IN, INDIANAPOLIS, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn (East), 6990 East 21 St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 6 IN, MERRILLVILLE, Merrillville's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Slovak Club, 6920 Broadway. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

SEP 13 IN, CROWN POINT, Crown Point's Monthly Card and Comic Show, American Legion, 1410 North Main (across from Ponderosa). T:20 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

SEP 25 IN, HIGHLAND, Highland's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln St. (1 block East of Indianapolis Blvd). T:20 F:$20 A:$1, 6pm-10pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

OCT 11 IN, CROWN POINT, Crown Point's Monthly Card and Comic Show, American Legion, 1410 North Main (across from Ponderosa). T:20 F:$25 A: $1, 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

OCT11 IN, MERRILLVILLE, Merrillville's

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

Monthly Card and Comic Show, Slovak Club, 6920 Broadway. T:20 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

KENTUCKY

OCT 10-11 KY, HOPKINSVILLE, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Pennyrille Mall. T:40 F:$45 A:free, Chris Walker 502-885-4023

MARYLAND

SEP 5 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP6 MD, BALTIMORE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, Elm Rd. at BWI Airport. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 20 MD, COLUMBIA, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, 7900 Washington Blvd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 20 MD, TOWSON, Serendipity Comic Book Show, Quality Inn, Balt. Beltway Exit 26S. A:$3 11am-4:30pm, Bob Horn, 410-398-6685

OCT 3 MD, HAGERSTOWN, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada, 910 Dual Hwy (Rte 40). F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OCT 11 MD, BALTIMORE, Comic Book Convention, Days Hotel, I-83 Exit 17, Timonium. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

OCT 11 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OCT 17 MD, SILVER SPRING, Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MASSACHUSETTS

SEP 17-20 MA, WATERTOWN, Card Show, Watertown Mall, 550 Arsenal St. A:free, Regular mall hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

OCT 10-11 MA, SPRINGFIELD, Comics, Toys, and More, Springfield Civic Center, I-91 North Exit 6, I-91 South Exit 7. T:75 F:$100, Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm, Zach Schenker 201-488-6293

OCT 15-18 MA,CHELSEA, Card Show, Mystic Mall, Rte 16 (Everett Ave) & Rte One (Carter St.).A:free, Regular mall hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

MICHIGAN

SEP 12 MI, WHITE LAKE, Cards & Comics Shows, Great American Diner, 9531 Highland Rd. T:20 F:$25 A:free 10am-4pm, Tim Nichols 1-313-623-1299

SEP 13 MI, ROYAL OAK, Encore-Con Comic Book and Baseball Card Show, American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

SEP 13 MI, WALLED LAKE, Card & Comic Show, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Tim 313-623-1299

SEP 27 MI, WALLED LAKE, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Tim 313-623-1299

OCT 3-4 MI, DEARBORN, Motor City Comic Con, Dearborn Civic Center, 15801 Michigan Ave at Greenfeild Rd. T:100 F:$150 A:$6, Sat. 11am-7pm, Sun 11am-5pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

OCT 4 MI, KALAMAZOO, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn (West), 2747 South 11th St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

OCT 11 MI, WALLED LAKE, Chucker's Hall, 1172 North Pontiac Trail. T:40 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Tim 313-623-1299

MINNESOTTA

SEP 6 MN, DULUTH, Twin Ports Collector's Convention, Holiday Inn, 207 W. Superior St. T:35 F:$40 A:$1 10am-5pm, Aaron Davis 218-722-9551

NEW HAMPSHIRE

OCT 1-4 NH, SALEM, Card Show, Rockingham Mall, Rte 28 (Mass Border). A:free, Regular mall hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

OCT 8-11 NH, NASHUA, Card Show, Royal Ridge Mall, Rte 3 Exit 1 & D.W. Hway. A:free, Regular mall hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

NEW JERSEY

SEP 3 NJ, PRINCETON, $100 Give-Away Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn, Rt 1 and Ridge Rd. T:25 F:$45 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

SEP 6 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book and Trading Card Extravaganza, Holiday Inn, pkwy exit 105. T:40 F:$40 A:$2 9:30am-4:30pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

SEP 9 NJ, BRIDGEWATER, Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, Rt 22 East. T:25 F:$40 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

SEP 12 NJ, EAST BRUNSWICK, Sports N Stuff, 10 Alvin Ct. T:32 F:$50 A:$2 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

SEP 13 NJ, NEW MILFORD, Sportscard and Comics Show, VFW Post 4290, 267 Madison Ave. A: $1, 10am-4pm, Tom 201-641-5601

SEP 13 NJ, PRINCETON, $500 Give-Away Sportscard & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn, Rt 1 and Ridge Rd. T:40 F:$50 A:$2 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

SEP 13 NJ, MATAWAN, Comic Book Show, Temple Beth Ahm, 550 Lloyd Rd. T:40 F:$50 A:$2 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

SEP 19 NJ, HACKENSACK, Sportscard and Comics Show & Sale, Immaculate Conception School, 386 Hudson St. A:$2 (under 8 free), Tom 201-641-5601

SEP 19 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book and Trading Card Extravaganza, Holiday Inn, Pkwy Exit 105 at Hope Rd. T:40 F: $40 A:$2 9:30 am-4:30pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

SEP 20 NJ, WOODBRIDGE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, 515 Rte 1 South. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm,Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 26 NJ, CARTERET, Card, Comic,Toy & Record Convention, St. Demetrius Convention Ctr, 681 Roosevelt Ave (Tpke Exit 12). T:60 F:$50 A:$4 adult, $2.50 child, 10am-4pm, Sergio Candido 908-855-5852

SEP 26-27 NJ, MORRISTOWN, Collectors' Festival, Headquarters Plaza Mall, Speedwell Ave. T: 45 F:$110 A:free, Sat. 11am-9pm, Sun 11am-5pm, Michael Reilly 201-538-4666

SEP 27 NJ, TOMS RIVER, Ocean County Comics & Cards Convention, Knights of Columbus Post #4969, Tennyson & Whittier Aves. off Rte 37 East. T:30 F:$40 A: $1.50 10 am-4:30 pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

OCT 3 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book & Trading Card Extravaganza, Holiday Inn, Pkwy Exit 105 at Hope Rd. T:40 F:$40 A:$2 9:30am-4:30pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

OCT 3 NJ, EAST BRUNSWICK, Sport Card & Comic Show, Sports N' Stuff, 10 Alvin Ct. T:32 F:$50 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

OCT 3 NJ, UNION, Collectors' Showcase, Boys' & Girls' Club, 1050 Jeannette Ave. T:45 F:$45 A:$2, 9:30am-3:30pm, Robert Giberna 908-874-4837

OCT 4 NJ, HAZLETT, Collectors' Showcase, Ramada Inn, GS Pkwy Exit 117, Rte 35 South. T:50 F:$50 A:$2, 9:30am-3:30pm.

OCT 4 NJ, PRINCETON, $500 Give-Away Sportscard & Comic Show, Ramada Inn, Rte 1 and Ridge Rd. T:40 F:$50 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

OCT 11 NJ, NEW MILFORD, Sportscard and Comics Show & Sale, VFW Post 4290, 267 Madison Ave. A:$1, 10am-4pm, Tom 201-641-5601

OCT 11 NJ, TOMS RIVER, Collectors' Showcase, Elks Post 1875, Washington & Clifton Aves. T:50 F:$45 A:$2, 9:30am-3:30pm, Sandy Grecco 908-291-1632

OCT 14 NJ, BRIDGEWATER, Sport Card & Comic Show, Holiday Inn Rte 22 East. T:25 F: $40 A:$1.50, 10am-4pm, Bruce Weinstein 908-821-1019

OCT 17 NJ, HACKENSACK, Sportscard and Comics Show & Sale, Immaculate Conception School, 386 Hudson St. A:$2 (under 8 free), Tom 201-641-5601

OCT 17 NJ, TINTON FALLS, Monmouth County Comic Book & Trading Card Extravaganza, Holiday Inn, Pkwy Exit 105 at Hope Rd. T:40 F:$40 A:$2 9:30 am-4:30 pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

NEW YORK

SEP 4 NY, BROOKLYN, Comic Book & Card Show, Knights of Columbus, Ave.N & E52nd St. T:20 F:$30 A:free, 6pm-10pm, Scotty O'Donnell 718-251-2075

SEP 5 NY, BAYSIDE, Sports Card & Comic Show, Adria Motor Inn, 220-33 Northern Blvd. T:30 F:$40-$50 A:free 10am-4pm, Donald Demsic 718-460-9758

SEP 6 NY,EAST MEADOW, Long Island Monthly Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Coliseum Motor Inn, 1650 Hempstead Tpke. A:free, 10am-4pm, Starwind Comics, 716-672-2913

SEP 10 NY, DEER PARK, Baseball & Comic Show, Constantino Brumidi Lodge, 2075 Deer Park Ave. A:free, 6pm-10pm, Paul 516-289-7398

SEP11 NY, BROOKLYN, Comic Book & Card Show, Knights of Columbus, Bay Ridge Ave & 10th Ave. T:50 F:$35 A:free, 6pm-10pm, Scotty O'Donnell 718-251-2075

SEP 18 NY, BROOKLYN, Comic Book & Card Show, Knights of Columbus, Ave N & E52nd St. T:20 F: $30 A:free 6pm-10pm, Scotty O'Donnell 718-251-2075

SEP 19 NY, STATEN ISLAND, Pepitone Free Autograph Show, Hylan Blvd. T:50 F:$65 A:$3, 9am-2pm, Sandy Greco 908-291-1632

SEP 20 NY, BAYSHORE, Third Sunday Collectible Show, Masonic Temple, 2 Union Blvd. A:free, 10am-4pm, Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

SEP 20 NY, FREDONIA, Western NY Comic Book, Baseball Card & Collectibles Show, Masonic Lodge, 321 E. Main St. A:free 10am-3pm, Starwind Comics 716-672-2913

SEP 20 NY STATEN ISLAND, Collectors' Showcase, Labetti Post #2159, Hylan Blvd. T:50 F:$60 A:$2, 9:30am-3:30pm, Sandy Grecco 908-291-1632

SEP 24 NY, BUFFALO, Comic and Card Show, Polish Falcons Club, 445 Columbia Ave (Depew, NY). Door Prizes. 6-10pm, Frank Caparaso 716-681-3422

SEP 25 NY, BROOKLYN, Comic Book & Card Show, Knights of Columbus, Bay Ridge Ave & 10th Ave. T:50 F:$35 A:free, 6pm-10pm, Scotty O'Donnell 718-251-2075

SEP 27 NY, FARMINGDALE, Comic Book, Baseball Card, and Toy Show, Masonic Temple, 197 Hempstead Tpke (Rt. 24) bet. Rte 135 & Rte 110. A:free, 10am-4pm,

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

SEPT 27 NY, QUEENS, Baseball Card and Comic Book Auction, A. Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd (Ozone Park). T:35 F:$35 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Joseph Carauna 718-845-7240

SEP 29 NY, QUEENS, Baseball Card and Comic Book Auction, A.Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd (Ozone Park). T:35 F:$35 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Joseph Carauna 718-845-7240

OCT 3 NY, BAYSIDE, Sports Card & Comic Show, Adria Motor Inn, 220-33 Northern Blvd. T:30 F:$40-$50 A:free, 10am-4pm, Donald Demisic 718-460-9758 or 279-3007

OCT 4 NY, EAST MEADOW, Long Island Monthly Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Coliseum Motor Inn, 1650 Hempstead Trnpke. A:free 10am-4pm, Starwind Comics 716-672-2913

OCT 8 NY, DEER PARK, Baseball &Comic Show, Constantino Brumidi Lodge, 2075 Deer Park Ave, A:free, 6pm-10pm,Paul 516-289-7398

OCT 18 NY, BAYSHORE, Third Sunday Collectible Show, Masonic Temple, 2 Union Blvd. A:free, 10am-4pm, Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

OCT 18 NY, FREDONIA, Western NY Comic Book, Baseball Card, & Collectibles Show, Masonic Lodge, 321 E. Main St. A:free 10am-3pm, Starwind Comics 716-672-2913

NORTH CAROLINA

SEPT 19 NC ROCKY MOUNT, Rocky Mount Comic Convention, Tarrytown Mall, 2320 Sunset Ave (Bus. 64 Exit off US 64). T:15 F:$40 (until Sept.1) A:free 10 a.m.-6p.m., Scott's Comics 919-571-1310 (6-9 p.m.)l

OCT 17 NC, RALEIGH, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada, 1520 Blue Ridge Rd. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OCT 18 NC, CHARLOTTE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada Airport, I-77 exit 7 at 515 Clanton Rd. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OHIO

SEP 5 OH, CINCINNATI, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, US 42, Interstate 275. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 13 OH, SANDUSKY, Monthly Sportscard & Comic Show, Sandusky Sheraton Inn, Route 250 (behind Mall). T:40 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Luke Meade 419-433-3431

SEP 26 OH, DAYTON, Reality Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, I-75 Exit 50A at 2455 Dryden Rd. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 27 OH, COLUMBUS, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, (East) I-70 & Hamilton Rd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 27 OH, COLUMBUS, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, 2124 South Hamilton Rd. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 27 OH, MENTOR, Comic Book & Non-Sport Card Show, Travelodge Hotel, I-271 to I-90 to Exit 306N. T:35-40 F:$35 A:$1.50, 10am-5pm, Irene Pike 216-255-8778

OCT 11 OH, SANDUSKY, Monthly Portscard & Comic Show, Sandusky, Sheraton Inn, Route 250 (behind Mall) T:40 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Luke Mead 419-433-3431

PENNSYLVANIA

SEP 12 PA, ALTOONA, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Hotel, 1 Sheraton Dr. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 19 PA, HARRISBURG, Reality Comic Book Convention, Best Western, I-83 Exit 18A. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 27 PA, ALLENTOWN, Comic Book Convention, Hilton, 9th & Hamilton. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 27 PA, DELAWARE WATER GAP, Card, Coin, & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn, Exit 53 off Rte 80. T:60, Adam Miller 717-238-5386

SEP 27 PA, EASTON, Easton Comicbook Show, The Easton Inn, 185 S.3rd St. and Larry Holmes Dr. F:$30 A:$1, 10am-4pm, Comicquest Productions 215-433-5223

SEP 27 PA, GREATER PHILADELPHIA, Serendipity Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn at King of Prussia Mall. A:$3 11am-4:30pm, Bob Horn, 410-398-6685

OCT 2-4 PA, BETHLEHEM, Card, Coin, & Comic Book Show, Trolley Station OCT 3 PA, SCRANTON, Scranton Comicbook Show, Royce Lackawanna Hotel, 700 Lackawanna Ave, Exit 53 off I-81. F:$30 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Comicquest Productions 215-433-5223

OCT 4 PA, HARRISBURG, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Hotel, I-83 Exit 18A, New Cumberland. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

OCT 4 PA, PHILADELPHIA, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn Airport, 76 Industrial Way. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OCT 18 PA, DELAWARE WATER GAP, Card, Coin, & Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn, Exit 53 off Rte 80. T:60, Adam Miller 717-238-5386

RHODE ISLAND

SEP 19-20 RI, PORTSMOUTH, Newport Antiques & Collectibles Festival, Glen Farm, Rte 138. Show Promotion Inc. 1-800-759-7469

TENNESSEE

SEP 4-6 TN, PIGEON FORGE, Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, N. Parkway. T:40 F:$75,3@$195 A:$2 9am-6pm(fri&sat)10am-5pm(Sun), Stephen or Dawn Osborne 615-932-1634

SEP 12 TN, NASHVILLE, All-Star Card & Comic Show, Roadway Inn Music City, 797 Briely Pkwy off I-40. T:40 F:$40 A: $1, 9am-5pm, Patty Speck or Dennis Swartz 615-780-3755

SEP 19 TN, CLARKSVILLE, Finest Hobby Convention, Riverview Ramada Inn, 50 College St. off Riverside Dr. T:20 F: $40 per 1, $75 per 2, $100 per 3, A: $1, 9am-5pm, Richard Maples 615-552-5412

OCT 3 TN, NASHVILLE, Legend's Collectors' Show, Ramada Inn Opryland, 2401 Music Valley Dr. T:20 F:$40 A:$1 10am-4pm, Dana Pinkard 706-234-8210

OCT 3-4 TN, PIGEON FORGE, Baseballl Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, N. Parkway. T:30 F:$50 A:$2 (door prizes), Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun.10am-5pm, Stephen & Dawn Osborne 615-932-1634 or 637-2338

OCT 10 TN, KNOXVILLE, Comic Book Convention, Holiday In (Cedar Bluff) 304 Cedar Bluff Rd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

OCT 11 TN, CHATTANOOGA, Comic Book Convention, Days Inn & Conf Ctr, 1400 N. Mack Smith Rd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

TEXAS

SEP 5-6 TX, LIVINGSTON, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, VF Factory Outlet Mall, 440 U.S. Hwy 59 Loop South. T:20 A:free 9am-5:30pm(sat)12:30pm-5pm(sun), Wade Thomas Jr 409-295-7277

SEP 5-6 TX, SAN ANGELO, San Angelo Comics & Sportscard Show, Convention Center, 500 Rio Concho Dr. T:40 F:$45 A:$1 9am-6pm(Sat)10am-4pm(Sun), Dale Anderson or Melissa 915-942-8388

SEP 19 TX, DALLAS, Dallas Minicon, Parkway Hilton, 4801 I-635 at Dallas Pkwy, across from Galleria. T:50 F:$55-$60 A:$2, 10am-5pm, Bulldog Productions 214-350-4305

SEP 20, TX, AUSTEN, Sport Card and Comic Show, Howard Johnson South, 3401 South I-35 and Woodward. T:35 F:$39 $69 for 2, A:free, 9:30am-5pm, Ralph or A. Willis, 512-431-0737

SEP 27, TX, SAN ANTONIO, Sport Card and Comic Show, Wyndham Hotel, I-10 and Wurzbach Rd. T:35 F:$50 A:$1 (under 10 free), 10 am-5pm, Ralph or A. Willis 512-431-0193

OCT 17 TX, DALLAS, Dallas Minicon, Parkway Hilton, 4801 I-635 at Dallas Pkwy, across from Galleria. T:50 F:$55-$60 A:$2, 10am-5pm, Bulldog Productions 214-350-4305

VIRGINIA

SEP 12 VA, ARLINGTON, Comic Book Convention, Howard Johnson's, 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

SEP 12 VA, RICHMOND, Reality Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Crossroads I-64 exit 39A at 2000 Staples Mill Rd. F:$50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 13 VA, VIRGINIA BEACH, Reality Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Oceanside, Atlantic Ave at 21st St. F: $50 A: $3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

SEP 13 VA, VIRGINIA BEACH, Comic Book Show, Pavilion Conventiont Ctr, 1000 19th St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

OCT 10 VA, ARLINGTON, Reality Comic Book Convention, Howard Johnsons, 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy. F: $50 A:$3, 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

OCT 18 VA, RICHMOND, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn (Fanny's), 6531 W. Broad St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

WEST VIRGINIA

OCT 4 WV, WHEELING, Ohio Valley Comic Book Convention,Eagle's Hall, I-70 & Exit 218. T:30 F:$35 A:$2.00, (under 6 free), 10am-4pm, Jeff Harper 216 -499-6056

ATTENTION SHOW PROMOTERS

Having a Comic Book show? Convention listings in the Wizard Show Calendar are free.

Send us:

Name of the show, Date and Hours, City,State & Address, # of tables & Prices, Admission charge, Contact Name and Telephone Number.

Send To:

Wizard Show Calendar

P.O. Box 648

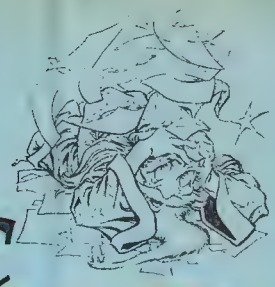
Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Or Fax:

(914) 354-9278

For certainty of placement, please send information 6 weeks prior to month of show. If possible, do not leave out any information. Shows missing Date,City or State information will not be listed. Please print clearly. *Do not send flyers.* Ad rates available upon request.

Patrick Daniel O'Neil, Editor Pat McCallum, Asst. Editor



Magic WORDS

Wizard Press P. O. Box 648 Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Dear Wizard:

1) A few months ago I purchased a signed *X-Men* #1 by Jim Lee. The month after I bought it, I rushed to our local comic store and got a nice gleaming copy of Wizard #8. I was sure that the expensive comic would be in there along with a hefty price mark next to it. However, to my dismay, I could not find the comic I was searching for. Even next month's Wizard didn't have the signed *X-Men* #1.

2) I know I shouldn't be poking my nose into places where it doesn't belong but, since you're so good at taking suggestions, I was wondering if you would consider lengthening the "Magic Words" section of your super wonderful, outrageously funny magazine. (A little brown nosing never hurt anyone, right?)

Ted Heus
Kenai, AK

The reason that there are no autographed comics in the price guide is because no definite price can be fixed to that item at this time. A lot of what you'll pay for an item has to do with where you are. If you live in the same town as Chris Claremont, you'll most likely pay less for his autograph than someone would in say, Alaska. It also matters what you have them sign, and what they sign it with. Our suggestion is that you have newer items signed with a metallic ink pen, and get a photograph of you and the artist together, possibly even holding the autographed item to prove its authenticity."Magic Words" might get an extra page sometime early next year, as an answer to your last question.

Dear Wizard:

Recently you have started bagging your magazine and including collector's cards. This has allowed Wizard to raise its popularity. But since *Wizard* #11, you have also raised your price. I can see why this is necessary to accommodate the costliness of including trading cards like Spawn, which have a prism border, and also to buy the materials and machines to have and insert these trading cards, but it's really annoying.

When *X-Force* #1 came out, nobody bought one and opened that one. They bought two or more and opened only one to read, to preserve the value. With a comic like *X-Force* #1, that's only $1.50, it's okay to buy two because they're only three bucks total. But when Wizard charges $3.95 for a magazine that's bagged, and you want to read it, still preserving its value, you have to pluck down eight smackers to buy two. It would be greatly appreciated if you could find another way to enclose trading cards, not like *Youngblood* #1, where you have to cut them out, but not completely bag the issue (so you have to buy two).

Another thing. Since the arrival of Wizard #10, Wizard has become much more famous. I've even seen it advertised as a "hot pick" in major back/future issues ordering services like ETM. I realize you guys must think this is great (not to mention you get an increased paycheck), but I hope you don't fully bag the Wizards just so people have to buy two and you guys get to roll in the dough. Try not to let the fame get to you because all my friends agree we like the card but would hate it if you became all glamorous.

Vinny Van Loon
Concord, MA

Ok, let me address the raised cover price topic again. Wizard was increasing in price between issue #10 and #11 because of the quality of the magazine. The paper we use, the color, the glossy covers, posters, polybag, trading card, everything. Check out every issue of Wizard over the previous one. See the changes? Higher quality. Better content. Fewer errors. We put all the money Wizard makes and pour it right back into the magazine, so no, we do not roll around in dough.

Getting back to the polybag issue, we have said it before, we say it now and we'll say it again, polybags should not be considered collectibles and many polybagged comics will be damaged by the plastic that will yellow the comic. Rip open your *Wizards*--we want you to enjoy every issue.

As for us Wizard dudes and dudettes getting swelled heads, don't worry. No matter how popular the magazine gets, our hat size will remain the same.

And a note from Pat O'Neill:

Not everybody bought more than one copy of* X-Force *#1. Some bought only one (that's what I did). Some bought none. Don't buy all the hype.

Dear Wizard:

I have just finished reading your interview with the Image Comics folks by Alex Chun, and I must say it has me worried.

Who is going to be left to do all the great comics? I know there are many great artists and writers out there, but some of the best are leaving our favorite comics. Will the loss of Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld, and Erik Larsen mean the books they were doing will become second rate? The art work on *X-Men*, *X-Force* and *Spider-Man* is some of the best I have ever

seen. Besides, the artwork I love the stories and characters in these books, and if the artwork slides the entire concept is affected.

Now I know I will still be able to get their work on their independent books, but it will never be the same. Sure, the new characters might be great, but I simply will not be able to afford all their new books and still collect my old favorites.

I do wish them all well on their new venture because it does seem right for them, but I hope they do not completely forget their roots.

Joseph Haddock
Manhasset, NY

Your worries are echoed by a lot of comic fans, but I think they're unnecessary. I'm not sure how long you've collected comics, so you might not be able to relate to what I'm going to say. Back when I first started collecting comics (a little over ten years ago), the attention was placed on the character, not the creative team. The characters were awesome, you felt for them and the stories were really worth reading. Over the past three to four years comics kind of lost that, and the emphasis has been placed on how hot an artist is or some cover gimmick to get people to pick up the book. Not that the creative team isn't important or that the special covers aren't cool, it's just that when someone plunks down a couple of bucks to read a superhero magazine, it should all be about that superhero, not filled with a lot of blah, half-hearted filler stories or just pretty art.

Sirs:

While viewing guide #11, page 66 offers a subscription to *Wizard*. Issue #7 shows a Flash (DC Comics) cover. The issue that I have stowed away is of X-O Manowar.

In future issues, regarding the cards' section, I think an added extra would be to place unopened-sealed boxes in your guide.

Josh Javage
Santa Clarita, CA

***Wizard* #7 had a direct market cover (X-0 Manowar) and a newsstand cover (The Flash). The reason was this: When we decided to run the Barry Windsor-Smith X-O cover, we knew that not only was X-O a new character, he also was not sold on the Newsstand. This would turn off our newsstand fans who wouldn't know X-O from Exxon. That's when we called in our good buddy Bart Sears to do us a Flash cover. That's the whole story.**
And I'll pass along the unopned box price guide idea along to Steve Shamus.

Dear Wizard:

In less than a year, your magazine has easily become one of the most popular publications about comics. The format of *Wizard* is excellent, combining a diverse selection of articles in an attractive, relatively affordable package. The combination of news and values on comics, cards and toys gives readers the info they want, without having to buy three or four publications.

However, I have come not praise to the *Wizard*, but to buy him. Well, buy may be a little harsh, but I do think there are several points on which Wizard is sorely lacking.

First of all, many of the articles that appear in *Wizard* are greatly lacking in depth, and seem like nothing more than a fluff excuse to print a whole bunch of accompanying pictures and fill space. Often your reviews of new comics, such as *Spawn* or *Youngblood* sound less like a critical review, and more like the same sort of hype that publishers usually release. Hype is the publisher's job, not yours. The comics industry has grown tremendously, and with literally hundreds of books on the market every month, fans can't buy everything. A good, solid, critical, review of a new, or lesser known, book can help fans decide what to plunk down the bucks for, and what books to leave on the shelf.

Perhaps, we could also see a bit less coverage of only "hot" items, and a little more focus on quality stuff. Marvel comics are not bad, they are fun, escapist reading. However, they are not the best material on the market as far as quality writing and creativity go. Why don't you cover more independents, besides Valiant and Image Comics, which is just Marvel on speed. People don't buy as many independents, often because they don't know what is out there.

Some elements of the industry, such as buying comics because of speculative value, I think are overemphasized. If the truth were known, very few comics buyers are going to buy a new home with the money they make buying and selling comics. And if a particular book does skyrocket in value, it will eventually drop back down because, face it, anybody who would actually pay 70+ dollars for *New Mutants* #87 is nuts, especially when you can buy a reprint for a buck. Comics should not be about sealing a book away in an acid-free, sunlight proof, titanium vault. Comics should be about FUN. If you are buying a comic for any reason other than an enjoyable read, you may as well not bother.

I realize that this letter may upset some people, but I hope you will print it. I would like to know if any other readers agree with any of the points raised, or if I am a lone voice crying out in the wilderness. One final note, perhaps your letters page should consist of a few more letters that are actually about something, rather than discussing whether or not Iron Man can beat up Cable and Wolverine. After all, they are fictional characters.

Jim Lancaster
Smithfield, PA

Ask The Wizard

Q: What was the name of that thing the sand people rode around in Star Wars?
—MT, Marion KY

A: Bantha.

Q: When is the X-Men cartoon coming out?
—CC, Reno NV

A: Check out next month's "Hollywood Heroes" for the scoop.

Q: Is Carnage dead?
—JF, Cicero IN

A: Is anybody ever dead at Marvel?

Frustrated with a question that no one can answer? Problem solved. Just write your question to:

Ask The Wizard
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet, NY 10954-0468

You have some good points, Jim. We have focused a great deal of the magazine on "hot" topics, but that's not such a bad thing. If something's popular, it's because a lot of people like it, and it deserves press coverage, so we won't stop our strong profiles on Marvel, Image, Valiant or whatever. What we will start to do is cover the smaller companies and do profiles on the lesser known-creators.
As for your other comments, just because you don't like something doesn't mean other can't enjoy it. People should be aware of all that's available to them and choose what they like. If you don't like a comic, a story, or even a letters page, do yourself a favor and don't read it. But give everything a chance.
Pat O'Neill adds:
Wizard doesn't "review" upcoming comics. We can't. Usually, the comic book in question hasn't been released (or even finished) when we write about it. So, all we can write is what the publisher or creator tells us about it.

Dear Wizard:

My intense study has shown a lack of concentration on the subject of the other Marvel characters in your magazine. Such characters as Iron Man, the (ahem) Fantastic Four, Thor, the Sub-Mariner, Captain America, Daredevil, the Avengers and to some extent, Spider-Man and the Hulk. I believe the characters I have just mentioned, though they may not sell that well, are the embodiment of the spirit of Marvel. Putting them on your cover or having them spotlighted in your magazine may not bring great sales, but would show your truly are the Guide to Comics.

Well, my wife has disappeared off to somewhere, so I must be going.

Reed Richards
Four Freedoms Plaza
New York, NY

Nobody takes this guy seriously. It's not really Mr. Fantastic. The Real Mr. Fantastic is missing and was replaced by the evil doppleganger in the Infinity War. People must think we're stupid.

Dear Wizard:

1) What's the difference between dollar share and piece share in the market watch?

2) How do you decide who the Top 10 heroes and villains are?

3) Why do the *Batman* listings start at issue #110?

Mike Kaplan
Upper Saddle River, NJ

Okay, here we go:
1) Dollar share is how much a company generated money-wise in the industry, and piece share is how much of a product was sold in the industry.
2) The Top 10 heroes are all based upon which characters are appearing in the Top 10 Comics, and whose books are going up in the price guide.
3) Our price guide covers Silver Age to current books, and doesn't go back into the pre #110 *Batman* and other Golden Age books.

Oh Great and Powerful OZ. Whoops, wrong Wizard!

When I stopped rolling from fits of laughter after reading your comment on who is the traitor, or rather, who will be the traitor to the X-Guys, I decided to write for the first time.

Get Real! Is that the best you dinks can come up with? Jubilee? Jubilation?! Come ON!! (Your Flimsy Theories Ripped to Shreds) Marvel writes Jubilee to be a kid who is totally against killing anyone, let alone her own surrogate family. She is so damned positive in her attitude even Logan's doom and gloom outlook doesn't plunge her. Frankly, she's just too lightweight to be heavy duty.

(My Iron Clad Theories)

1) Bishop, believing that he is indispensible in the efforts for mutantkind, or rather, that his absence will guarantee the downfall of the eventically challenged, may want to make sure he is in the future.
2) He may idolize the X-people, but, when facing the reality as not being what he envisioned them to be, they may seem soft in biceps. So he could come to the conclusion that the X-Men would better serve mutantkind as martyrs. See what martyrs have done for Christianity, let alone Mojo world!

Bradley Wayne Tribbett
"Big Bad Brod"
East Moline, IL

Bishop the Traitor!?! The X-Men as martyrs? Very cool theory. Anyone else agree?

Dear Wizard:

I think Forge killed the X-Men of the future. In *Uncanny X-Men* #287, Jean Grey says"...only one left...powers negated." Didn't Forge have a neutralizer gun that took away a superheroe's powers? Even though he destroyed that gun after he accidentally used it on Storm, who said he couldn't build another one?

Mike Settle
New Lenox, IL

This "who killed the X-Men debate" has been raging through Wizard for months. I, after re-reading my X-comics, sorting through tons of mail and hearing all sorts of "ironclad" theories have come to one conclusion. I no longer think it might be Jubilee or Psylocke, my money is on Forge. But who knows? What I'm happy to announce is the first ever Wizard X-Poll. If you're sure of yourself, send a letter to "The X-Traitor" c/o the address at the beginning of Magic Words, along with who you think the traitor is, why he/she will betray the X-Men and what issue it will happen in. When the truth is finally revealed, the person with the closest guess will be declared winner and will be awarded...well, we'll think of something. So all you Sherlock Holmes wanna-be's get crackin and send your theories in toWizard now!

Dear Wizard:

In issue #11, you actually were foolish enough to reiterate the idea that Iron Man could single-handly defeat the X-Men. Ha! What a joke! Let's see...Iron Man, a hero who is a recovering alcoholic with heart trouble and a screwed up nervous system. Not to mention he has no abilities himself. Wolverine would slip in and open that tin can in a hurry if the two should ever combat. Even if Wolverine didn't get him, Jean Grey's awesome TK abilities would shut Iron Man down in a matter of minutes. Game over, shell head.

Tommy Woodward
Marion, KY

I was beginning to wonder if everyone had forgotten our great "Iron Man vs. The X-Men" debate. Well Tom, you and the thousand other fans who wrote in screaming about how the X-Muchachos would toast Iron Man have forced the following response from Doug "I'm a Beaten Man" Goldstein.

Okay, there's two reasons that Iron Man couldn't defeat the X-Men single-handedly. 1) They're invisible to his sensors and so he couldn't lock on to them with his weapon systems. 2) He never got around to making his helmet "psychic-powers-proof" so Xavier could toast him pretty easily. Psylocke couldn't, because she doesn't have the range. That's it. Besides those two things, Iron Man could kill the X-Men (or any X-Team) single handedly.

That should put an end to that.

Dear Wizard:

This is in response to the letter in issue #11 that was supposedly written to Doug "The guy who insulted the X-Men" Goldstein. To paraphase that letter: "People have forgotten what it means to be a cool character because some other books have flashy art and half-naked women." I was under the impression that they are the cool characters simply because they are half-naked women, I'm sure every other heterosexual male comic collector agrees with me.

John Funk
Burnsville, MN

You got my vote.

Dear Wizard:

Anyone remember Nth man? He was a John Doe, super-soldier with white hair who, in the last issue (#16) warped off somewhere. Now you remember him? Well, I know it wasn't part of the Marvel universe, but Cable can skip thru alternate realities and times. So, I say that Nth Man #1 was Cable's first appearance. HA!

Sean Jordan
Halifax, Canada

Always good to wrap up a letters page with a really weird letter. Nth Man Cable? I've heard dozens of cable theories ranging from Cannonball being the Big C, or even Cable being a clone of Nathan Summers. But the Nth Man? C'mon.

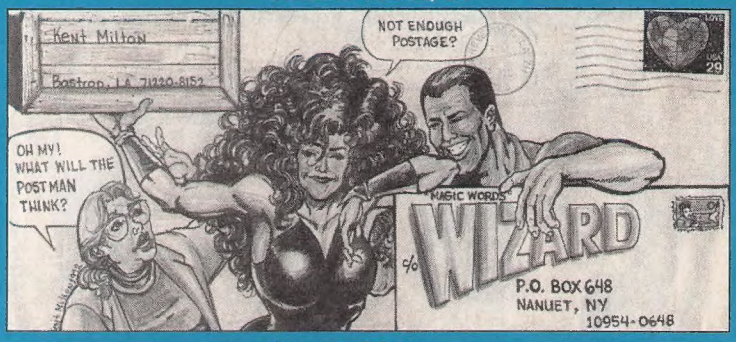
Ok, Another issue ofWizard comes to a close. Before I go, let me remind you guys of a couple of things. First, don't forget to keep the fabulous letter art coming and second, write in if you think we should have a Wizard pen pal section. Ok, that's it. Adios.

Fabulous
Letter Art

Thanks for the terrific letter art. Every month our diehard fans with talent to burn adorn their praise (or complaints), sometimes, we think, just to get a little extra attention. Guess what. It works. Here's four for this month!
(Remember, we can only show Letter size envelopes. Thanks!)

Eugene Brown
Kansas City, MO

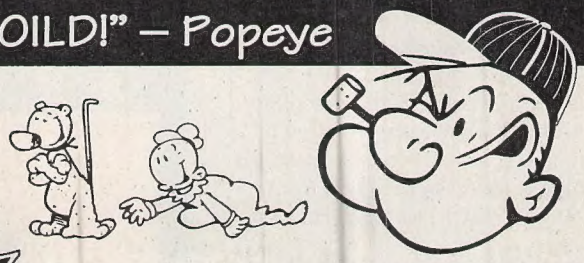
Richard J. Miller
Windsor Locks, CT



Kent Milton
Bastrop, LA

Ryan Terry
Houston, TX

"WELL, BLOW ME DOWN! THIS GOTS TA BE DA BESK DERN CARD SET IN DA WOILD!" – Popeye



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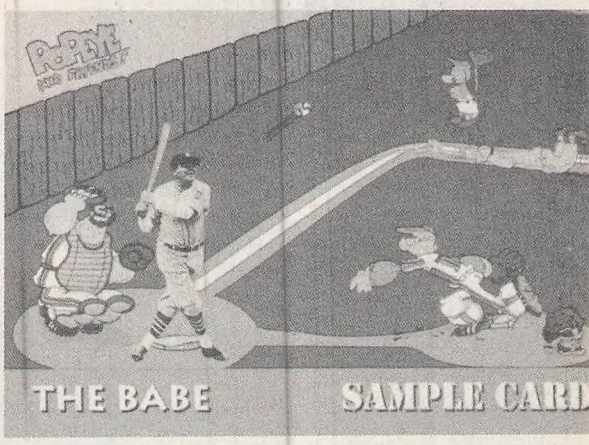

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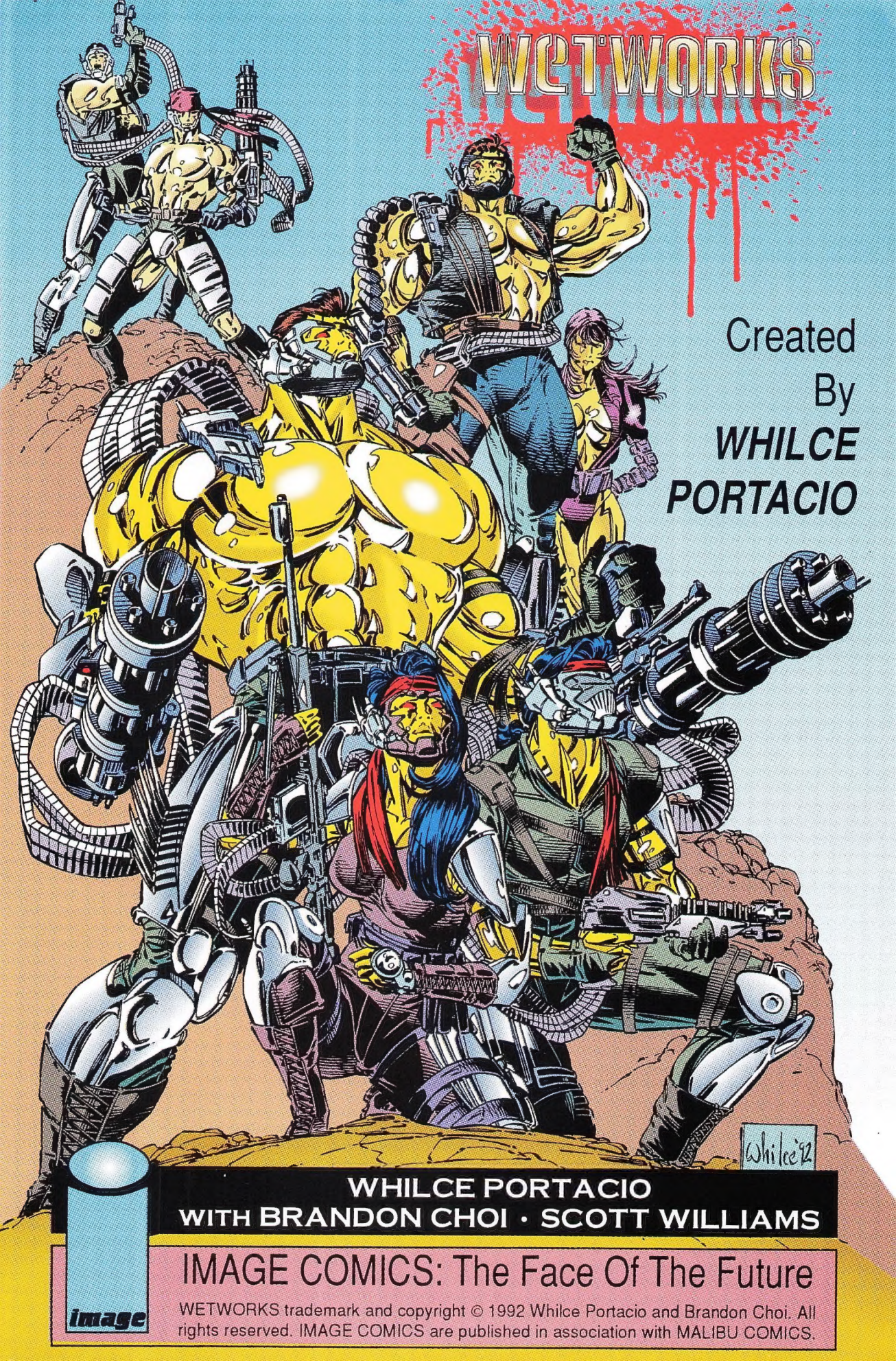
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